An informational, literary, educational, and training magazine
of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA

اَللّٰهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۙ يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ ؕ
القران الحكيم ٢:٢٥٨

April 2023

Ahmadiyya Gazette

United States of America

وَالَّذِيْنَ اسْتَجَابُوْا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَاَقَامُوا
الصَّلٰوةَ ۪ وَاَمْرُهُمْ شُوْرٰى
بَيْنَهُمْ ۪ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ

"And those who hearken to their Lord, and observe Prayer, and whose affairs are decided by mutual consultation, and who spend out of what We have provided for them."

Holy Qur'an Chapter 42:39

AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

Muslims who believe in the Messiah
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] of Qadian

Ahmadiyya Gazette Online

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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

s.a./s:	Ṣallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)
a.s./a:	'Alaih-is-Salām
r.a.:	Raḍiyallāhu 'Anhu/'Anha (may Allah be pleased with him/her)
r.h.:	Raḥimahullāhu Ta'ālā (may Allah shower His mercy on him)
a.b.a.:	Ayyadahullāhu Ta'ālā Bi-Naṣrihil-'Azīz (may Allah support him with His mighty help)

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Verse numbers in the references from the Holy Qur'ān count Tasmiya at the beginning of a chapter as the first verse.

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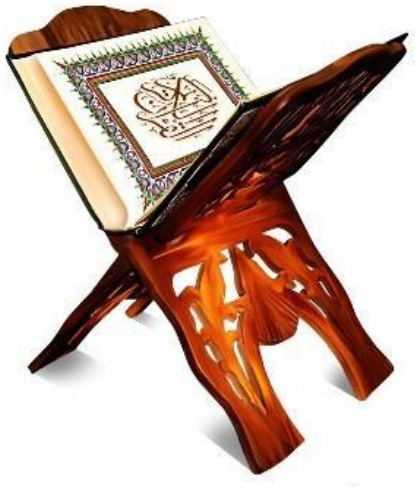
The Holy Qur‘ān on Consultation (Shūrā)



وَالَّذِيْنَ اسْتَجَابُوْا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَاَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ ص وَاَمْرُهُمْ شُوْرٰى بَيْنَهُمْ ص وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ﴿۳۹﴾

“And those who hearken to their Lord, and observe Prayer, and whose affairs are *decided* by mutual consultation, and who spend out of what We have provided for them.” (42[Ash-Shura]:39) [English translation of the Holy Qur’ān by Maulawi Sher Ali]

Commentary:

The verse lays down شُوْرٰى (mutual consultation) as the basic principle which should guide Muslims in the transaction of their national affairs. This simple word contains the nucleus of a representative form of government of which the west is so proud. The Khalifah or Head of an Islamic State is bound to take counsel with the representatives of the people when he is to take a decision of vital national importance.

Incidentally, the verse implies a prophecy that the harassed and persecuted followers of the Holy Prophet would soon be entrusted with the great responsibility of conducting the affairs of a great State. The Surah was revealed at Mecca very early in the Holy Prophet’s ministry when the very fate of Islam was hanging in the balance and the then poor and helpless Muslims did not even know where to lay their heads. The following verses also point to the great responsibilities of Muslims when vast political power would fall into their hands. [The Holy Qur‘ān with English Translation and Commentary (a.k.a. Five-Volume Commentary), Commentary on (42[Ash-Shura]:39)].

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَاْمُرُكُمْ اَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْاَمٰنٰتِ اِلٰٓى اَهْلِهَا ۙ وَاِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ اَنْ تَحْكُمُوْا بِالْعَدْلِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهٖ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ سَمِيْعًۢا بَصِيْرًا ﴿۵۹﴾

Verily, Allah commands you to give over the trusts to those entitled to them, and that, when you judge between men, you judge with justice. And surely excellent is what Allah admonishes you with! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (4[Al-Nisa]: 59) [English translation of the Holy Qur’ān by Maulawi Sher Ali

Commentary:

As in the previous verses authority and dominion were promised to Muslims, the Quran in the present verse proceeds to bid them entrust authority to such persons as possess the necessary qualifications to rule. Authority or power to rule has been here described as a "trust" of the people in order to point out that, truly speaking, it belongs to the people and is not the birth right of any particular individual or dynasty.

The verse also draws the attention of the Muslim people to their heavy responsibility in respect of the very important matter of electing their Chief or *Khalifah.* They are warned that if in electing a *Khalifah* or a Chief they allowed considerations of personal liking or nepotism to prevail against the interests of the State or the community or those of religion and displayed lack of conscientiousness, they would be called to account like one false to his trust. The verse also condemns dynastic or hereditary rule and institutes instead a representative form of government. The *Khalifah* or the ruler is to be elected; and in electing him, the people are bidden to vote for one best fitted for the office. The *Khalifah* or the ruler in his turn is bidden to be fair and just in his administration fair to individuals, fair to communities and fair to the State as a whole.

The words, *that you judge with justice*, apply both to the head of the Muslim State and to all those persons who are entrusted with the work of administration. They are all enjoined to use their authority equitably and well.

The addition of the Divine attributes of "All-Hearing and All-Seeing" at the end of the verse is meant to remind Muslims that if at any time they find it difficult to carry out His commandment, then instead of violating it, they should pray to God and He will hear their prayer and will see to it that they get their rights. (See General Introduction for the detailed discussion of the institution of Khilafat). [The Holy Qur‘ān with English Translation and Commentary (a.k.a. Five-Volume Commentary), Commentary on (4[Al-Nisa]: 59)]

The Holy Prophet on consultation

May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم "الْمُسْتَشَارُ مُؤْتَمَنٌ "

Abū Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrates: The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "One who is consulted is trustworthy (that is, is obliged to discharge the trust of providing appropriate advice adequately)." (Sunan Abi Dawud, book 43, Hadith 356, General behavior, chapter consultation)

عَنِ الْحَسَنِ قَالَ: وَاللَّهِ مَا اسْتَشَارَ قَوْمٌ قَطُّ إِلاَّ هُدُوا لأَفْضَلِ مَا بِحَضْرَتِهِمْ، ثُمَّ تَلاَ: {وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ}

Hadrat Al-Hasan narrated that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said: "People never seek advice without being guided to the best possibility available to them." Then he recited from (42[Ash-Shura]: 39), "and manage their affairs by mutual consultation." (Al-Mufrad 258, Chapter: Consultation, Book 13, Hadith 3)

عَنْ جَابِرٍ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ . صلى الله عليه وسلم- " إِذَا اسْتَشَارَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ فَلْيُشِرْ عَلَيْهِ "

It was narrated from Jabir that that the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said: "If one of you consults his brother, then let him advise him." (Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book of Etiquette) [English translation is taken from the Ahmadiyya Gazette, USA, March-April 2015, p. 3]

The Promised Messiah originates Shūrā

During the first Jalsa Salana in 1891, the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) announced that the newly initiated Jalsa (Convention) would continue annually every 27th of December. Accordingly, in 1892, Jamā'at members travelled to Qadian for the Jalsa Salana and partook of the Promised Messiah's (may peace be on him) blessed company.

The Jalsa Salana of 1892 became known as the "big Jalsa" among those attending. Tarikh-e-Ahmadiyyat describes how this Jalsa was held next to the pond in Qadian, the stage was built from the mud collected from in and around the pond. The Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) sat upon a raised platform on which carpet had been laid, Jamā'at members were seated around him on the floor.

The first speech was delivered on 27 December 1892 by Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din (may Allah be pleased with him) on the death of Jesus. Thereafter, Hazrat Syed Hamid Shah (may Allah be pleased with him) recited a Qaseeda before the audience. Then, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) delivered a powerful lecture regarding a section of his book "Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām" that dealt with angels; many Muslim clerics had raised objections against it. The speech had a profound effect upon those present.

The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) later also conversed with his companions after Zohar and Asr prayers.

On 28 December 1892, a Majlis Shūrā was held to discuss plans for Tabligh across Europe and America. About 40 prominent companions contributed and presented their proposals. The gathering decided to create a detailed leaflet portraying the beautiful teachings of Islam and distribute it for free in Europe and America. Counsel was also taken on building a press in Qadian, a list of those companions was also recorded who would contribute to this project.

Another proposal was concerning the initiation of a newspaper that would aid in spreading the teachings of Islam Ahmadiyyat. Maulana Syed Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi (may Allah be pleased with him) was given the responsibility to promote this proposal across India.

The aims and purpose of Jalsa Salana was discussed by Majlis Shūrā and its organization was given structure; a committee was proposed who would take care of arranging Jalsa Salana. The proposal presented Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din (may Allah be pleased with him) as the In-Charge. The Shūrā concluded with prayers. (Ref: Tarikh-e-Ahmadiyyat Vol. 1, pp. 442-443) (English translation adapted from alislam.org)

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is progressing with regards to the institution of Majlis Shūrā

Khalifatul-Masih V addresses 100 years of Majlis Shūrā, UK

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) addressed the Majlis Shūrā UK 2022 on 22 May 2022, at the Tahir Hall, Bait-ul-Futūh Mosque, in Morden, London.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V said:

The institution of Majlis Shūrā has gone from strength to strength and its scope has greatly increased. Even a cursory glance through the history of our Jamā'at is enough to testify to the fact that the help and support of Allah the Almighty has always been by our side and has enabled the Jamā'at to progress and flourish in all respects and this is certainly true with regards to the institution of Majlis-e-Shūrā. The blessed seed that was sown 100 years ago has not only taken firm root, but has flourished and its fruits are now spread all across the world. The Majlis Shūrā is a body that is unlike any worldly parliament or assembly. If we cast an eye upon the proceedings of worldly parliaments, we often see how endless debates take place that lead to nowhere other than to fuel hostilities and bitter conflict amongst the parliamentarians. Ultimately, their proceedings often serve to sow division within their people and often ferment tensions between nations as we are seeing at this time. In those political settings, there are normally two sides who have opposing agendas and their respective members come with preconceived ideas or policies that they seek to push forward without considering the merits of others. They desire that their party policies are adopted and try to impose their personal beliefs and wishes upon others. More often than not, politicians crave power and lust after public approval and a desire to increase their own political authority or status. Certainly, it is the hallmark of worldly parliaments and assemblies that their members often prioritize loyalty to themselves and their party over and beyond loyalty to their nation and to the cause of truth and justice.

Al-Ḥamdu Lillāh, the institution of Majlis Shūrā, is, as I have said, unlike any political or worldly assembly; rather, it is a consultative body that has far greater value and stature than any parliament or congress, but this can only remain the case so long as the members of Majlis Shūrā are those who personify integrity and manifest the highest moral values, and remain free from all forms of politics or deception.

Always remember that the principal objective and goal of Majlis Shūrā is to formulate proposals that serve to fulfil the divine mission of the Imam of the Age, the Imam Mahdi, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him), who was sent to revive the noble and glorious teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and to spread the message of Islam to all corners of the world. Therefore, as members of the Majlis Shūrā, it is your duty to present your sincere recommendations to the Khalifa [Caliph] of the time who serves as the spiritual father of the entire Jamā'at. Thereafter, he will consider your advice with the sole objective of ensuring that whatever plans or policies are devised are those that facilitate the spread of the message of Islam, and draw mankind towards its Creator and towards fulfilling the rights of one another.

As I said earlier, this year marks 100 years since the foundation of the institution of Majlis Shūrā within our Jamā'at and at such times, it is important to reflect on the past so we can better appreciate the blessings

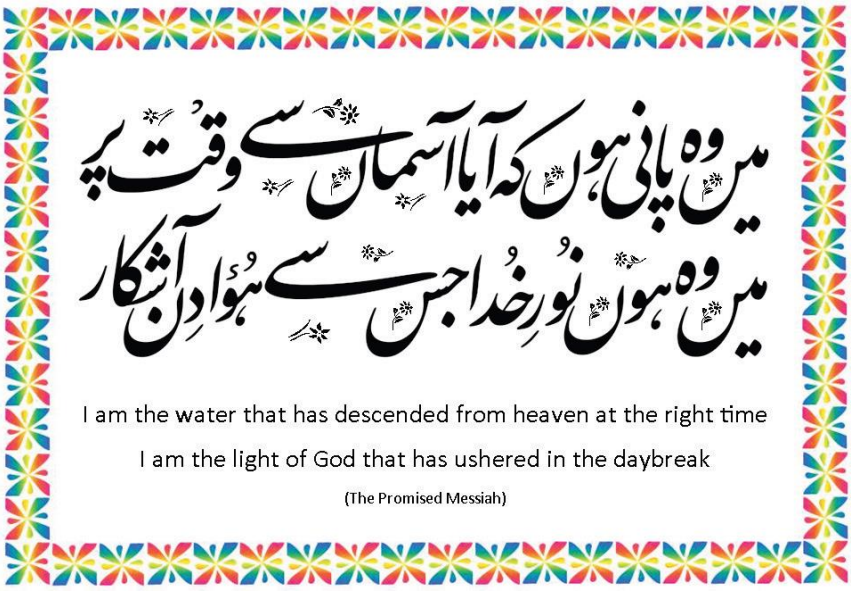
bestowed upon us by Allah the Almighty. If we look back to the first Majlis Shūrā that took place in 1922, the full budget for the entire Jamā'at presented by Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) [the Second Caliph] was just 55,000 rupees. Even adjusted for inflation, that represents only around 150,000 to 200,000 pounds in today's money. Yet, now with the grace of Allah, the annual UK Jamā'at budget alone has reached millions of pounds. The same is true in Jamā'ats such as Germany, Canada and the United States, and other Jamā'at's of the world.

Accordingly, the question we must now ask ourselves is whether we still have the same spirit of sacrifice, tolerance and patience that those before us displayed. Are we ready to serve Islam with the same passion and dedication that our predecessors did, and are we ready to make every possible sacrifice for the sake of our faith, or are the words we repeat in our pledges simply hollow and meaningless claims? This is something for every office-bearer and every Shūrā delegate to reflect upon.

In terms of Tabligh and Tarbiyat [moral training], I also wish to take this opportunity to remind all members of Majlis Shūrā about the crucial importance of the publication and dissemination of the Holy Qur'an and all Jamā'at literature. In the past, there were times when we did not have adequate funds to print the Holy Qur'an or other books in vast quantities. However, now with the grace of Allah, the Jamā'at is printing hundreds of thousands of copies of books, magazines, and pamphlets each year. For example, this year, the Holy Qur'an in its original Arabic text was printed in a beautiful format, as was the English translation of Hazrat Maulawi Sher Ali (may Allah be pleased with him). Similarly, the split word Urdu translation of Hazrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq (may Allah be pleased with him) is being published in large numbers. Apart from this, the books of Hadith [sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him)], the books of the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) and the Khulafa, as well as many other books are being printed.

Similarly, in this era, we must utilize the various online and social media platforms of the Jamā'at to convey the message of Ahmadiyyat far and wide. All Ahmadis should be encouraged to view the online resources and content produced by MTA and other Jamā'at platforms and to share its content with others.

And so, I hope and pray that whatever you have deliberated upon and whatever recommendations you send to me are those that have been formulated with the true objectives of Majlis Shūrā kept in mind at all times and with the deep desire that the bond of unity within our Jamā'at reaches new levels and that the message of true Islam reaches all parts of the world. With these words, I pray that may Allah the Almighty bless the institution of Majlis Shūrā as it enters its second century, and may our Jamā'at forever witness the divine blessings and rewards of Allah the Almighty.' (Adapted from alislam.org)


میں وہ پانی ہوں کہ آیا آسماں سے وقت پر
میں وہ ہوں نورِ خدا جس سے ہوا دن آشکار
I am the water that has descended from heaven at the right time
I am the light of God that has ushered in the daybreak
(The Promised Messiah)

Summaries of Friday Sermons of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V
March 2023

May Allah support him with His mighty help

3 March 2023

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said: As I have already described in my previous sermons, the Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) has given us the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and explained to us the means by which we can understand and act upon its teachings. The treasure of knowledge that the Holy Qur'an offers is what truly connects us with Allah. Indeed, there is no other means of attaining nearness to Allah. The Promised Messiah (Peace be upon him) says in one of his poems: "The Qur'ān is the way to God, it is the Word of God; Without it, the garden of spiritual knowledge is incomplete."

At the end of the sermon Khalifatul-Masih made an appeal for prayers for Ahmadis in Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Algeria and specially for Ahmadis in Bangladesh who were attacked during the first day of their Jalsa Salana, resulting in injuries to many participants. He said all that we can pray for such people is: "O Allah, tear them apart and crush them into pieces." (From Summary of Friday Sermon supplied by Wakil-ut-Tabshir. Islamabad, UK)

10 March 2023

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) continued to describe excellences of the Holy Qur'ān as described by the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) in his teachings.

Khalifatul-Masih quoted the Promised Messiah for the following topics:

1. The Holy Qur'ān is perfect guidance for the righteous.
2. The Holy Qur'ān comprises of all truths.
3. The Holy Qur'ān is unmatched in eloquence and articulacy.
4. The miracles of the Holy Qur'ān.
5. The Holy Qur'ān is the means to recognize Almighty God.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih announced the martyrdom of Zahid Hassan of Bangladesh who was brutely murdered by Muslim fanatics who attacked the convention site. He prayed that may Allah take the attackers to task. His funeral was held the next morning. (From summary of Friday Sermon dated 10 March 2023)

17 March 2023

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V continued to describe the true status of the Holy Qur'ān as narrated by the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V said that the Holy Qur'ān truly explains the purpose of our religion. The Qur'ān is a cure of all types of illnesses. It is very much needed that we reflect over the Holy Qur'ān. The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, explains that those who do not act upon the Holy Qur'ān will never see progress and success. Our purpose should be to become a worshipper of God and act upon His teachings. The Holy Qur'ān is a scripture which unites all people.

Whilst mentioning two miracles of the Holy Qur'an, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) states that the Muslim Ummah has been granted two miracles. The first is the actual words of the Qur'an that are perfect and eloquent beyond measure. The second is the impact and potency of the Holy Qur'an. If the potency and impact of the Qur'an was missing, the Muslim Ummah would be deprived of the many signs and miracles it has been granted.

Apart from this, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) urged all Ahmadis to pray for the Ahmadis of Pakistan. He also urged the members of the Community to pray for the Ahmadis of Burkina Faso and Bangladesh, where Muslim clerics and fanatics are causing trouble for them. (From summary of Friday Sermon dated 17 March 2023)

24 March 2023

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V said that 23rd March is known within the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community as the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) Day. We are fortunate to have accepted the Messiah and Mahdi whose advent was in accordance with the promise of God. On 23rd March 1889, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) accepted the pledge of allegiance in Ludhiana for the first time and thus the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was initiated.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V explained some of the

signs of the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him).

He quoted the Promised Messiah who said that there is no other community which bears such resemblance to the companions of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him). The signs which the companions witnessed are witnessed today.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V urged members to pray for Ahmadis in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Burkina Faso.

31 March 2023

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V said that this month brings with it an increased attention towards worship, fasting and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. The month of Ramadan and the Holy Qur'an have a distinct connection, as God Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an:

"The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur'an was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination." (The Holy Qur'an, 2:186)

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V said that according to some narrations, it was on the 24th of Ramadan that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) received the first Qur'anic revelation. It is also recorded that during this month, the angel Gabriel would go over the Holy Qur'an with the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Thus, especially during this month, we should focus on reciting and listening to the Holy Qur'an and its commentary. Programmes in this regard are also available on MTA which everyone should benefit from.

He said that when we read the Holy Qur'an with its translation and commentary, it is then that we can implement the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and adopt them in our lives. Therefore, we should focus on this during this month especially and also take advantage of the various lessons on the Holy Qur'an arranged in mosques during this month.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said that over the course of recent sermons, he has been highlighting the excellences and beauties of the Holy Qur'an in light of the Promised Messiah's (peace be on him) teachings. It is important that everyone listen to these and ponder over them so that they may reap the true blessings and rewards associated with the Holy Qur'an. He said that he would continue mentioning the excellences and beauties of the Holy Qur'an in light of the Promised Messiah's(as) writings.

Full original text of Friday Sermons by the Caliphs of Ahmadiyya Islam is available in print in Al-Fazl International, Al-Fazl Rabwah and Badr. These publications are also available online at alislam.org under periodicals. Translations and summaries of Friday Sermons are available in various languages on alislam.org under Friday Sermons. Weekly Al-Fazl International (Urdu) can be subscribed at amibookstore.us.

Invitation to Writers for the Ahmadiyya Gazette, USA

We are thankful to all those who send us articles and Ahmadiyya news of chapters for publishing in the Ahmadiyya Gazette, USA. May Allah reward them for their sincerity.

We recently published three souvenirs to commemorate hundred years of Ahmadiyyat in the US. The last souvenir was on American Icons of Ahmadiyyat. We feel that many inspired souls could not be part of that souvenir. We invite to all those who want to contribute on the US icons of Ahmadiyyat. In the December 2022 issue of online Ahmadiyya Gazette, we published on "Hussein Abdul Aziz of Philadelphia." Please send us your articles at gazette@ahmadiyya.us, any article which can be of general interest to a large number of audience. (Editor, the Ahmadiyya Gazette, USA)

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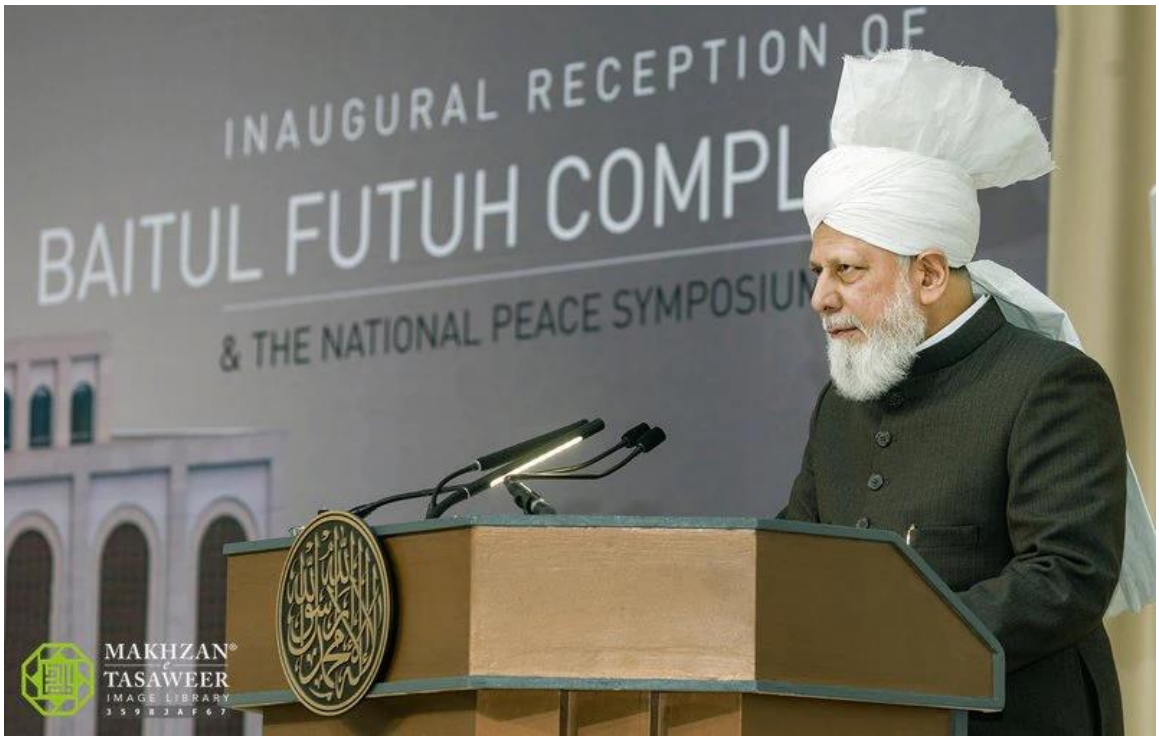
Khilafat News

Khalifatul-Masih V inaugurates newly built Bait-ul-Futūh complex—expresses views to achieve global peace and security at the National peace symposium



Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V inaugurated new multiple-purpose Bait-ul-Futūh Mosque Complex in Morden, Surrey. He took a brief tour of the complex, inspecting its various features and facilities.

After leading Maghrib and Isha prayers, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V met with various dignitaries, after which he proceeded to address the National UK Peace Symposium. The theme for this year's event was "Foundations for True Peace."

National Secretary for External Affairs read out a special message from the UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, which was followed by three brief speeches from guest speakers. They were Sir Ed Davey MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Paul Scully MP, Minister for Technology and the Digital Economy and Fleur Anderson MP, the Shadow Paymaster General. The recipients of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace were introduced briefly. They are Barbara Hofmann (Mozambique/Switzerland) and Dr Tadatoshi Akiba (Japan). They were in attendance at the event and were honored to receive the prize from Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper).

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V then delivered the keynote address.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad started by expressing his gratitude to the guests who were attending the event. He said that this event, which also incorporates the peace symposium, is being held to inaugurate the reconstruction of the Bait-ul-Futūh Mosque Complex.

Mosques are built for the worship of Allah the Almighty, and it is stated in the Holy Qur'ān that a person who fails to pay heed to other people's rights, their worship, will become the means of their downfall and humiliation instead of their salvation. Muslims are commanded to worship facing the Ka'bah, but it is equally essential to always consider fulfilling the objectives of the construction of the Holy Ka'bah, which are outlined in one of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān as follows:

> "Whoso enters it [the sacred House of Allah], enters peace." (Surah Aal-e-'Imran, Ch. 3: V. 98)

Stressing the importance of establishing peace, he said, "Only in peace lies the salvation of the world. Peace is the golden key to unlocking the door to societal progress and development."

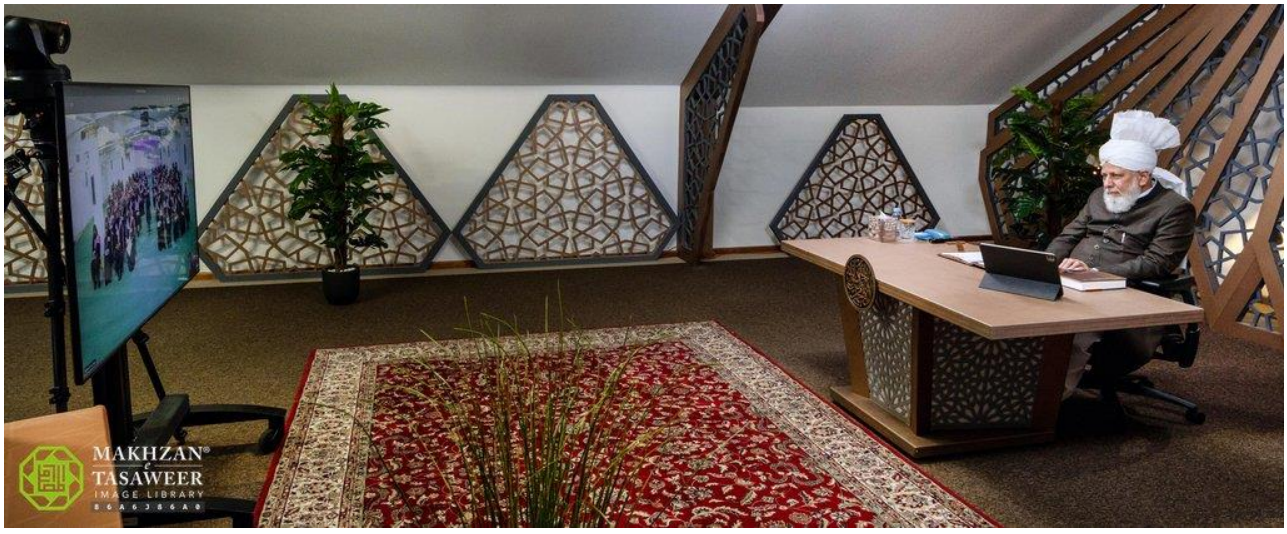
Commenting on the Russia-Ukraine war, Khalifatul-Masih said, " Sadly there is no sign of how or when this war will end. However, it has not stopped certain political leaders from saying that when it does end, Russia should be subjected to extreme sanctions and made to pay for its actions."

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper) warned, an extremely dangerous consequence of the war has been the solidification of the opposing political blocs and alliances, and the rhetoric being used in international relations is becoming increasingly hostile on all sides. Much has been written about how Russia and China are forging closer ties. The truth is that war often begets war. There are genuine concerns that the Ukraine conflict could spread further or that other nations would be emboldened to abandon diplomatic efforts to resolve their disputes and resort to force.

In the end, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V prayed: "May Allah the Almighty grant people wisdom, and may all of mankind manifest those principle objectives that the Creator and Master of this world desires from us; to fulfil His rights, and those of His creation."

Be the true portrayal of Islamic teachings

Students from Lajna Ima'illah Bangladesh meet Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V



Students from Lajna Ima'illah Bangladesh were blessed with the opportunity to meet Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V, may Allah be his Helper, in a virtual Mulāqāt on 26 February 2023. One hundred and twenty-two university and college students were present.

Thereafter, the students had the opportunity to ask Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih various questions on an array of matters.

Fiza Ahmad, pursuing a degree in Zoology, asked Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper), how students could study the Holy Qur'ān alongside their usual studies. She also sought advice on how to simultaneously study the Holy

Qur'ān and science in a complementary manner.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih said:

"Being a Muslim, you should recite the Holy Qur'ān daily, you should also read the translation of it. Then, you will know what you are reading from the Holy Quran, what tilāwat you are doing, [and] you will know the meaning of it."

"Apart from that, [as] you are studying Zoology, you should try to find the verses from the Holy Qur'ān that are related to science, the existence of human beings and life on earth. Then, you can study and relate those verses to your subject. This is how you can find out more about or get more enlightened about your subject from the Holy Quran.

Jamia Ismita, who is pursuing a PhD, asked Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper) if a married Lajna member gets the opportunity to study abroad, yet her husband is not allowed to go with her, then what should she do?

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper) asked if she was married, to which she replied that she was married and also had a son. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper) then inquired if it was not possible to continue her PhD in Bangladesh and said, "First preference should be that you do it in Bangladesh because if your husband doesn't want you to go there or you cannot take your son and your husband along with you, then it is better to do it in Bangladesh, instead of going abroad.

Sneha Rahman, currently studying Urdu language and literature at a university, stated that due to her busy schedule and participation in university programs, she is unable to offer Zuhr and 'Asr prayers at their appointed times. She said that she compensates for this by combining the prayers at maghrib time. Upon hearing this, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper) told her to take a 10 -15-minute break during the early time of Zuhr to offer the Zuhr and 'Asr prayers and offer maghrib and Ishā prayers at home. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his Helper) explained that it is not appropriate to combine the Zuhr and 'Asr prayers with Maghrib due to the programs at the university. (Adapted from report prepared by Al-Hakam)

"Have ambitious goals"

Advice of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V to Ghana Khuddām Amila

Members of the National Amila of Majlis Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya Ghana were blessed with the opportunity to meet Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V, may Allah be his Helper, virtually on 12 March 2023.

At the opening of the meeting, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) conveyed his Salaam and commenced the meeting by leading all those present in silent prayer.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said, "In this world, everybody is indulged, too much, in worldly affairs and worldly things, and there are so many programs that are being shown on television and there is some other material available nowadays on [the] internet and everywhere that can destroy the lives of youngsters. So, just to keep them streamlined, we should make more effort for their training on tarbiyat."

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) addressed the Amila and said, "Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya should contribute at least 33% of the total amount realized by the Jamā'at towards Tahrik Jadid."

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said, "Keep on telling them, from time to time, that Salat is an obligatory thing and they should offer it regularly and better to offer it in congregation." Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) further emphasized the importance of reading and understanding the Holy Quran.

In the end, addressing Sadr Majlis, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said, "Whatever I wanted to say, I have already told you during my introduction and now I have given you a brief sketch of your work so you should work on it. If you work on it, I think, your Majlis will flourish, In-Shā-Allah! Allah the Almighty help you, Allah the Almighty bless you." (Adapted from report prepared by Al-Hakam)

International News of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Muslim fanatics attack annual convention of Bangladesh

Twenty-five years old Zahid Hassan gets status of martyrdom

Muslim fanatics attacked the convention site of Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Bangladesh on 3 March 2023 despite assurances from the local authorities that it would be safe to hold the convention. As the attack took place, the authorities were delayed in their reaction. It was in this chaos that a young man Zahid Hassan was martyred.

Zahid Hassan who was the son of Abu Bakr Siddiq of Bangladesh. He was martyred while doing security at the gate of the premises. He was 25 years old. He accepted Ahmadiyyat in 2019, three months after which he submitted his application for Waṣiyyat. After accepting Ahmadiyyat, he would regularly write letters to Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper). It was during his studies that an Ahmadi friend told him about Ahmadiyyat and after two years of discussions, Zahid Hassan accepted Ahmadiyyat. During the attack, the fanatics attacked with stones and various types of weapons, along with setting fires along the way. When the fanatics had infiltrated the wall, the Ahmadi youth were instructed to protect the premises. In the fray, Zahid Hassan was separated from the others he was with, which the attackers took as an opportunity and they mercilessly and brutally attacked him. They martyred him so violently that it took two hours to identify him.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said that this is the state of Muslims, who perpetuate such heinous crimes. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) instructed against mutilating the bodies even of the enemy, yet this is how they treat a Muslim. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V prayed that may Allah take the attackers to task. His funeral was held the next morning. He was very kind, however before accepting Ahmadiyyat he was not very inclined towards prayer. This changed after becoming an Ahmadi, when he became very regular in his prayers. He was never heard speaking in a loud tone with anyone. He was an active member of the Ahmadiyya Youth Association and had been serving as an office holder. He always carried out his responsibilities with great care and attention. He strove a great deal in order to attain religious knowledge. The last letter he wrote to Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) was while on the train going towards the convention and also expressed that there were various dangers, however he expressed his resoluteness in faith. When asked why he applied for Waṣiyyat so soon, he said that everything the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) said was true, and the Promised Messiah enjoined to join Waṣiyyat, which is why he did. He was the only son of his parents; he also has two sisters. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) prayed that may Allah grant his family patience, and also elevate his station in heaven. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said that according to God's promise, the martyr has attained everlasting life. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) prayed that may Allah bring the perpetrators to justice. These people think that by attacking us they can stifle our resolve. However, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) said that he has received letters from other youth in Bangladesh who expressed that if more martyrdoms are required then they are ready. Hence the opponents can do nothing. (From Friday Sermon of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V dated 10 March 2023)

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community build first mosque in N'Djamena, capital of Chad

By the blessing of God and prayers of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V, a double story mosque was constructed in the N'Djamena, capital of Chad. This is first central mosque in Chad. This mosque is in headquarter of Jamā'at Ahmadiyya, Chad. There is missionary house adjoining to the mosque. The foundation stone of the mosque was laid by missionary on 7 October 2020.

The mosque was inaugurated on Friday, the 11 March 2022 by missionary. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V named the mosque as Mubarak Mosque. (Khalil Ahmad Khan, representative of Al-Fazl International, Chad)

Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Belize help renovate local orphanage

The country of Belize (located northeast coast of central America) is home to about 13 orphanages. Countless Belizean children have been traumatized by gang violence, domestic violence, losing loved ones to murder, traffic accidents, and illnesses.

Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Belize, knowing of this situation, was very fortunate to provide an assisting hand to one of the local orphanages in Belize City. Upon a visit to the orphanage, it was noticed that it was in need of some renovations. As these are children who are often neglected, Jamā'at Belize ensures they support the local orphanages in every possible manner.

The Khuddām of Belize worked together to help renovate the orphanage. This gesture brought great joy to the children and was a very humbling experience for Khuddām of Belize as well.

It is noteworthy that the Khuddām of Belize, who are all converts, may not have had prior experience in selfless service to mankind before joining Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Belize. (Report Stephen 'Ata'ul Haq Gabb, Missionary, Belize)

President of Suriname visits Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Earlier this year, in 2023, Jamā'at-e-Ahmadiyya Suriname invited the President of the Republic of Suriname, His Excellency Mr. Chandrikapersad Santokhi, for a dinner meeting with the National Amila. For this occasion, a request was also made to Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) to send a message for the President. In his letter dated 26 February 2023, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) prayed:

"May Allah make your meeting with the President successful in every respect and may you be able to convey to him the peaceful message of Islam Ahmadiyyat. May Allah enable the uncertain situation of the country to stabilize soon. May Allah bless all your activities with success and may He be your Guardian, and Helper at all times. May the Jamā'at in Suriname advance and progress in all fields. Allah be with you."

On 2 March 2023, President Santokhi visited the Nasir Mosque, the headquarters of the Jamā'at in Suriname. Sadr Jamā'at Samseerali Sheikh-Alibaks and my humble self received Mr Santokhi.

After a brief introduction of the Amila members, the national Sadr delivered a short speech in which he highlighted the teachings of Islam regarding the duties of leaders, and the rights and duties of the countrymen. He also spoke about hospitality in Islam and the special bond the President has with our Jamā'at.

Thereafter, the President was invited for a short speech in which he mentioned that many wise lessons are anchored in the objectives of Islam. Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) brought a message of peace, love, respect and justice to the world. He also stated that religious organizations make an indispensable contribution to the well-being and development of society. Mr. Santokhi thanked the Jamā'at for its continuous support and asked for prayers for the betterment of the country. He also mentioned that he felt honored and delighted to be at the mosque.

After the formal session, the attendees enjoyed dinner with the President. Before his departure, the President was presented with some gifts on behalf of the Jamā'at. The event was covered by the media team of the President's cabinet. Through an article and video report shared on social media, the message of the Jamā'at also reached the public. (Report Laiq Ahmad Mushtaq, Missionary in-charge, Suriname)

Jamā'at represent Islam at an interfaith event in Brazil

Delegates of eleven religions gather at Police Headquarters in Rio de Janeiro

The delegates of eleven religions were invited for the first time at Police Headquarters, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to participate in interfaith meeting. About one hundred and fifty officers participated in the event. All religions were asked to talk about their religions. Jamā'at Ahmadiyya was represented by Hafiz Ehtisham Ahmad Momin. The people present asked many questions which were answered adequately. (Report by Hafiz Ehtisham Ahmad Momin representative of Al-Fazl International, Brazil)

US Embassy and EU officials visit Jamā‘at Ahmadiyya Kosovo

On 6 March 2023, two officials from the US Embassy in Kosovo visited the center of Jamā‘at Ahmadiyya Kosovo, in Pristina. They were Mr. Dominic P McIntyre, the Political Officer for Human Rights and Ms. Raba Gjoshi, the Political Advisor for Human Rights.

On 9 March, two officials from the European Union Special Representative's Office in Kosovo also visited the center of the Community. They were Mr. Stefano Gnocchi (Head of Section Non-Majority Communities, Religious Cultural Heritage and North Section) and Mr. Pleurat Kurti (Language/Outreach Officer for Community Affairs).

They were informed about the history of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat in Kosovo. We also had the opportunity to tell them about some of the religious, cultural and educational activities that we organize in the Jamaat.

We presented them with some books of the Jamaat, such as Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues, and the Albanian translations of The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, Life of Muhammad[sa], and World Crisis and the Pathway to Peace. (Besmir Yvejsi, Kosovo Correspondent for Al-Hakam)

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِإِيمَانٍ
أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُم مِّنْ عَمَلِهِم
مِّن شَيْءٍ ۚ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ ﴿﴾

And those who believe and whose children follow them in faith — with them shall We join their children. And We will not diminish anything from the reward of their works. Every man stands pledged for what he has earned. 52[Al-Ṭūr]:21/22

Miami chapter holds meeting on "Messenger of Peace" at Bait-un-Naseer Mosque, Hallandale Beach, FL

A vote of thanks to the community by Prof. David Master, St. Thomas University Miami

Miami chapter of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA held Seerat-un-Nabi Jalsa (The Messenger of peace) on 23 February 2023 at Bait-un-Naseer Mosque.

Guests were served dinner at the end of the event.

(From Left) Dr. Safeer Bhatti, Ashan Kashif, Missionary Faheem Arshad, Usama Chaudhry, Dr. Tariq Mahmood (President, Miami), Rayyan Shaikh, Professor David Master, Faheem Uddin, Usman Chaudhry, Fahad Ahmad, Farooq Ahmad, Dr. Taha Shaikh, Mutaher Chaudhry. Front row: Ansur Ahmad Faheem, Faizan Khan, Talal Khan

Missionary Faheem Arshad delivered an interactive and engaging presentation to all members and guests. There were fifty-eight participants, including men, women, and children. Twenty-nine participants were non-Ahmadi Muslim guests from Saint Thomas University. Bags and folders were distributed to the guests that included Jamāʿat literature. The guests had an opportunity to tour various sections of the mosque and met Jamāʿat members. Guests were served dinner at the end of the event.(Report by President of chapter)

Rasheeduddin Malik father of Rafiuddin Malik, President of Columbus chapter passes away

Rasheeduddin Malik of Toronto, Canada passed away on 2 April 2023 at the age of 82, Inna Lillāhi Wa Innā Ilaihi Raji'oon. [(Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.' (Al-Baqarah 2:157)]. He was the father of Rafiuddin Malik, President of Columbus, Ohio chapter. May Allah the Almighty grant the departed soul a place in the highest echelons of paradise and give patience and fortitude to the family, Ameen.

He was the eldest son of Malik Salahuddin, Darvish Qadian who had served as Private Secretary to Hazrat Muslih Mau'ūd (may Allāh be pleased with him) and also authored the book series "Ashab-e-Ahmad" (The Companions of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him).

Ahmadiyyat came to his family via his great-grandfather (*Pardaada*), Malik Barkat Ali (may Allāh be pleased with him), who accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1897/1898. Both of his grandfathers, Malik Niaz Muhammad (*Daada*) and Hakeem Din Muhammad (*Naana*) were also companions of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him).

Rasheeduddin Malik had the honor of being an *Aseer e Rah e Maula*. He was imprisoned twice in Pakistan, once in 1974 when Ahmadis were declared not-Muslim, and then again in 1984 for wearing a badge of Kalima Tayyaba.

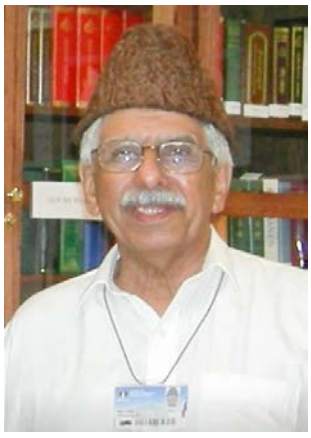
He was a zealous *Da'ī Ilallah* and would do whatever it took to spread the message of Islam Ahmadiyyat. He was so passionate and fearless in spreading the message of Ahmadiyyat that during his travels, he would have the Friday sermon cassettes of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV (may Allāh shower His mercy on him) played in public buses in Pakistan in mid 1980s when there was great hostility against Ahmadis. He always made new contacts and took them to Jalsa Salana, Canada and arranged to have his Tabligh contacts watch Jalsa Salana UK and International Bai'at on MTA at his home.

He had the opportunity to serve the Jama'at in various capacities over many decades including Qa'id Khuddamul-Ahmadiyya, Za'im Ansarullah, and Secretary Tahrik Jadid and Waqf Jadid.

Rasheeduddin Malik was the most selfless person. He had a great spirit of helping people and did this tirelessly throughout his life. He helped many new families arriving in Canada to settle there. He did not drive but went far and wide on buses and on foot to help people in need. After his demise, many people told the family members what he had done to help them that even his family did not know.

He is survived by his wife, 3 sons, 8 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. Treading in his footsteps, his sons and grandchildren serve the Jama'at in various capacities in Canada and USA. (Bashir Asad, General Secretary, Columbus, Ohio chapter)

Rafiullah father of Qudratullah Ayaz of Milwaukee passes away



Rafiullah passed away on 24 March 2023 in Milwaukee, WI. Inna Lillāhi Wa Innā Ilaihi Raji'oon. [(Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.' (Al-Baqarah 2:157)].

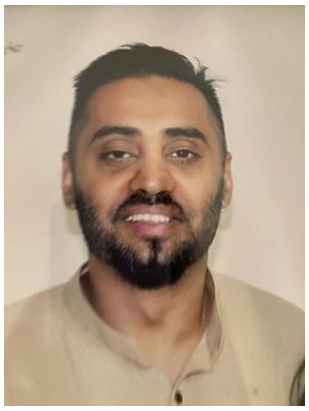
He was son of Baboo Barkatullah, retired postmaster in Rabwah, Pakistan. He was grandson of Qadir Bakhsh[ra] (Headmaster of a school in Qadian), a companion of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) and nephew of another companion Abdur-Rahim Dard[ra].

He retired from Telephone and Telegraph (T & T) Department in Pakistan as a Telephone Operator in 1997 and came to the US and lived in Milwaukee. His son Mr. Qudratullah is serving Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA in the editorial team of the Ahmadiyya Gazette, USA and Al-Nur, USA.

Rafiullah was a Musi and was buried at Wisconsin Memorial Park on 27 March 2023. He was very fond of distributing Tabligh fliers in Milwaukee. He left behind his wife, two sons Mr. Qudratullah Ayaz and Mr. Wajihullah Tariq and a daughter Mrs. Arshi Saleem. He had five grandsons and two granddaughters.

May Allah Ta'ala forgive him and elevate his status in Jannah and grant patience and steadfastness to all his loved ones.

Ashraf Shah of Orange County passes away



Ashraf Shah son of Anas Shah of Orange County Halqa passed away at the age of forty-five years. Inna Lillāhi Wa Innā Ilaihi Raji'oon. [(Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return. (Al-Baqarah 2:157)]

He was born on 2 January 1978 in Torrance to his parents, Anas and Naiyara Shah. He left behind sister Sohima, brother Anser and stepmother, Asifa. He was a gentle soul who was always ready to help others. He could connect with everyone, young or old and would make everyone laugh with his wit and humor. May Allah have mercy on the departed soul and rest him in peace. May Allah grant patience to the family to bear this loss. Ameen. Prayers were offered at Gravesite of Forest Lawn Cemetery on 23 March 2023 after the burial. (Naser Noor, President Los Angeles chapter)

Inspired Souls

Mohammad Ashraf of Columbus, Ohio

Served in Sierra Leone from 1978-81 under Tahrik Jadid Scheme

Mohammad Ashraf was born in 1954 at Chak No. 93, TDA Layyah, Punjab, Pakistan. His mother passed away in January 1967. His father Chaudhri Mohammad Yousaf moved to Rabwah, Pakistan when Mohammad Ashraf was studying at Ta'lim-ul-Islam High School, Rabwah. The purpose behind shifting was much better education standard at Rabwah. The religious environment was also far better than any other place in Pakistan. In Rabwah, the standard of education was very high. The teachers were dedicated and were interested in students' success. It was a good spiritual experience. Mr. Ashraf had the chance to attend Ramadan Dars during the stay in Rabwah and participated in activities of Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya and Ijtimas. Mohammad Ashraf's brothers and sisters also studied at Rabwah. Ashraf did his graduation and M.Sc. Physics from Ta'lim-ul-Islam College, Rabwah. He completed his education in the year 1976.

Mr. Ashraf was married to Umtul Mujeeb in April 1977 in Pakistan. He has a son and a daughter. Both of them are married and are living in the US.

There was a three-year Waqf-e-Aridi scheme by Anjuman Tahrik Jadid, Rabwah. Mohammad Ashraf applied for it and was selected on merit. He was sent to Sierra Leone, West Africa for three years (1978-1981) under this blessed scheme. He was posted at Ahmadiyya Secondary School, Poajibu, Kenema district in Sierra Leone. He taught physics and mathematics to 9th and 10th grade students. Ahmadiyya schools had always good reputation for standard education.

In Sierra Leone, there were opportunities for Tabligh. He used to travel to near villages with principal and well-known missionary. He was known for his knowledge and ability to converse with non-Ahmadis. He helped establishing some schools and mosques in the area. Mr. Ashraf remember about an event happened in Sierra Leone in those days:

> "An Ahmadi Paramount Chief died. His son was not an Ahmadi. He asked non-Ahmadi Maulawī for funeral prayers. We came to know about this. We hired a transport and went to the house of the chief. Our missionary was with us who convinced his son that funeral prayer and other rituals shall be done by Ahmadis. So, our missionary led his funeral prayer. His burial in Ahmadi graveyard was arranged. Non-Ahmadi Maulawīs wanted to bury him in their graveyard. Our timely efforts avoided un-necessary clash."

After end of Waqf-e-Aridi in Sierra Leone, Mohammad Ashraf got an opportunity and did a good teaching job in Nigeria. He taught physics in GSS Miango, Jos, Nigeria

for four years i.e.; from 1981 to 1985.

Mr. Ashraf, then migrated to the United States of America in 1985. He did his M.S. in Laser Optics from the University of Houston, Clearlake campus in 1989. He was President of IEEE (Institute of Electric and Electronics Engineers) chapter of the university. He had privilege to attend meetings at NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) near Houston.

Mohammad Ashraf moved to Columbus, Ohio and started business in Convenient Stores. He did this business for two years and then moved to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and was involved in the same Convenient Stores business for about ten years. The Ahmadiyya Mosque was about thirty miles away and it was not possible to offer every Jumu'a Prayer in the mosque. So, Mr. Ashraf offered his house for Jumu'a Prayer and other Jamā'at activities. About 15-20 Ahmadis from the vicinity used to come for prayer on every Friday.

Mohammad Ashraf then again moved back to Columbus, Ohio in 2003. He has been living in Columbus till today. Here in Columbus, Mr. Ashraf is doing business in Hotel Management.

Mr. Ashraf has the honor for working as a Secretary Tahrik Jadid and Secretary Waqf-e-Jadid for Columbus, Ohio chapter of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA in 2005. He has been serving as Secretary Ziyafat, Columbus chapter since 2005. (Compiled by Mahmud Ahmad Nagi from the verbal narration of Mr. Mohammad Ashraf.)

Notes on chapters and verses of the Holy Qur'ān by Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV[rh]

— Surah Saba to As-Saffat —

English Translation by Missionary Shahid Ahmad of Ghana

(Continued from March 2023 issue)

34. Saba: Introduction

This is a Meccan Surah, and including *Basmallah* it consists of fifty verses.

This Surah starts with the verse that all praise belongs to Allah Who is the Master of the heavens, and the earth also eulogizes him and, in the hereafter, as well songs of only His praise will be sung. Here it is a clear reference to the Holy Prophet[sa] that in his time his devoted followers will fill the heavens and earth with the Divine praise.

Next, in course of explaining mountains it was stated that mountains also stand for hardworking mountainous peoples. As mountains were not subjected for David[as] literally; but hardworking mountainous people were subjected to him. Thus, the mountains mentioned at the end of the previous Surah have been elaborated at this point.

After this account the jinn, who were subjected for Hazrat David[as] and Hazrat Solomon[as] and who performed very arduous tasks for them, have been elaborated that these were human jinn. They were not the jinn who are generally taken to be made of fire. The fire comes to an end the moment it enters water. But with regard to these jinn at another place the Holy Qur'ān states that they would plunge into sea and bring out pearls. Whereas the jinn made of fire cannot plunge into sea. Secondly, it states that these jinn were chained, whereas the jinn of fire cannot be chained. All these things made the children of David to be obliged to God. Therefore Hazrat Solomon[as], who was the foremost descendent of David in physical and spiritual sense, did justice to being grateful to God.

But when he was informed that his son, who would be enthroned after him, would be a mere body devoid of spirituality, as a result thereof he prayed to God that in such a case this kingdom may be wiped out in his time; he has nothing to do with such a worldly kingdom. Thus, this is what transpired exactly. After Hazrat Solomon[as] when his son was enthroned these very mountainous people rebelled against him once they learnt that a foolish king ruled them. And the worldly kingdom of Hazrat Solomon[as] was shattered to pieces.

When powerful empires shatter instead of praying to remain closer to each other out of mutual love their subjects pray for longer distances between each other as a result of mutual hatreds. In such a case they are made bywords, and are ground to pieces in mortars of the wrath of Allah. Then long distances are created between their communities so that peculiar scenes of wilderness are found between them where bush etc. start growing, whereas earlier they were granted great orchards and farms.

The teaching of patience given to the Holy Prophet[sa] at the end of the previous Surah has been repeated at this point that he must continue exercising patience in all circumstances. And his heart was strengthened by great glad

tidings that earlier major powers were just like very small nations; but Allah the Almighty has granted him spiritual kingdom of the entire world.

Next, the attention of the opponents has been drawn towards seeking judgment from Allah the Almighty through supplication that in ones or twos they should stand up before Allah to pray, and reflect that this prince of knowledge and wisdom, who has been granted the Holy Quran, is not insane at all.

Next, it is stated that you should reflect that when they will be utterly restless, a never-ending restlessness, they will be seized from a place nearby. The place nearby is the jugular vein. It means that they would be tormented terribly from within their selves. And in the next verse 'a position so far off' is a reference to the fact that repentance will be very difficult for such people. When they had failed to repent on difficult circumstances they went through, then how will they repent sincerely at the fear of seizure by Allah, which they see to be very far. Invariably a barrier is placed between such disbelievers and attainment of their carnal desires, as had been happening with the disbelievers in past times. But these unfortunate people always remain a victim of misgivings.

Notes: Saba

Verses 11-12

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا دَاوٗدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا ؕ يٰجِبَالُ اَوِّبِيْ مَعَهٗ وَالطَّيْرَ ۚ وَاَلَنَّا لَهُ الْحَدِيْدَ ﴿۱۱﴾ اَنِ اعْمَلْ سٰبِغٰتٍ وَّقَدِّرْ فِي السَّرْدِ وَاعْمَلُوْا صَالِحًا ؕ اِنِّيْ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿۱۲﴾

Subjugating mountains in these verses is a reference to the arduous mountainous peoples who were overpowered by the Prophet Davidas. And as a result, thereof they performed extremely heavy tasks for him. الطَّيْرَ probably stands for those righteous people who believed in him. They have been called *Tuyur* in spiritual term.

Another favor bestowed upon him was that he was taught the art of melting iron and using it for useful purposes. The use of coats of mail in war was started in his very time. Prophet Davidas was also directed not to make coats consisting of bigger rings, but they should be of smaller rings. Even if the coats were used to be made before his time, at least the coats of particularly smaller rings were started in the very time of Prophet Davidas.

Verses 13-14

وَلِسُلَيْمٰنَ الرِّيْحَ غُدُوُّهَا شَهْرٌ وَّرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ ۚ وَاَسَلْنَا لَهٗ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ ؕ وَمِنَ الْجِنِّ مَنْ يَّعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهٖ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ اَمْرِنَا نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ السَّعِيْرِ ﴿۱۳﴾ يَعْمَلُوْنَ لَهٗ مَا يَشَآءُ مِنْ مَّحَارِيْبَ وَتَمَاثِيْلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُوْرٍ رّٰسِيٰتٍ ؕ اِعْمَلُوْٓا اٰلَ دَاوٗدَ شُكْرًا ؕ وَقَلِيْلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُوْرُ ﴿۱۴﴾

And to subject the winds to Solomonas does not signify that he had invented a flying throne as some commentators relate such tales. But it signifies the fast coastal winds that would change their course after a month. And the verse refers to swiftly cruising sailing ships and their coming back at the force of such winds.

Prophet Davidas was given the ability to subject iron, whereas Prophet Solomonas was taught the art of mining a very fine quality metal, i.e., copper, and its various usages and industry.

The jinn mentioned at this point have already been discussed in the account of Prophet Davidas. They signify arduous mountainous people. The succeeding verse elaborates that they would undertake such colossal and arduous tasks which were to be impossible for other civilized people. In its detail are mentioned extensive castles followed by statues, basins like huge reservoirs, and heavy and large cooking vessels fixed in their places, which were too heavy to be shifted from one place to the other. These cooking vessels may have been used to cook food for his huge army.

Having mentioned these favors, not only Prophet Davidas but his children have also been advised to be grateful. That is to say, as long as they remain grateful these favors will not be taken away from them. But these favors were lost in the time of the son of Prophet Solomonas because he was bereft of any spirituality or any ability to rule.

Verses 41-42

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيْعًا ثُمَّ يَقُوْلُ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اَهٰٓؤُلَآءِ اِيَّاكُمْ كَانُوْا يَعْبُدُوْنَ ﴿۴۱﴾ قَالُوْا سُبْحٰنَكَ اَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِنْ دُوْنِهِمْ ۚ بَلْ كَانُوْا يَعْبُدُوْنَ الْجِنَّ ۚ اَكْثَرُهُمْ بِهِمْ مُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۴۲﴾

In these verses is a reference to those polytheists who had practically deified their high chiefs. The jinn at this point signify those very chiefs. The polytheists would take the name of some angels as well that they worshiped them. This is just an allegation on the angels; and the angels would declare no association of theirs with them on the Judgment Day.

35. Fatir: Introduction

This is a Meccan Surah, and including *Basmallah* it consists of forty-six verses.

This Surah as well, like the preceding one, starts with *Al-Hamd* (praise). The preceding Surah discusses Allah

Almighty's sovereignty on heavens and earth and that the entire universe is self-evidently busy praising Him. And here it draws attention to praise to Allah when Allah the Almighty originated the heavens and earth; because originating heaven and earth cannot be without a purpose. And before being a reference to the existence of the heavens and earth it is a reference to the benevolence of a Lord Who creates.

Verse 2 mentions the angels who possess two, three, or four wings. It never signifies that the angels possess any superficial wings. In fact, it is a reference to the four basic valences of matter as a result of which all chemical miracles take place. Especially the monotheist scientists draw the attention to the fact that as a result of chemical reaction of the four valences of Carbon with other matters the life which came into being is called Carbon based life by the scientists. This verse of the Holy Qur'ān mentions that there also exist the angels who possess more wings and hitherto man is unaware of them. And under the influence thereof wonderful chemical reactions will take place which are beyond the ken of the present-day man.

Once again in the current Surah two seas are mentioned, one of whom has saline water whereas the other possesses sweet water. But the miracle of the creation of Allah is that the flesh of marine life in saline water does not get salty; and the flesh of the marine life in freshwater is also non-saline. How was it possible that the flesh of the fish that regularly drink seawater is not at all affected by salinity of the water.

Next, follow the verses (17, 18) that warn mankind that if they failed to be grateful on the bounties of Allah the Almighty and persisted in disbelief then if Allah, please He would wipe them out from the land and bring a new creation instead; and that is not at all difficult for Allah the Almighty.

Then again mankind has been admonished that all forms of life on earth benefit from the water that descends from sky, and different varieties of fruit, with varied colors, grow of this water. The difference in colors is a reference to the fact that as you see fruits of varied colors growing from the soil of the same color, similarly though mankind descends from one Adam but have different complexions. They speak different languages, but they all are derived from the same language. Now there doesn't seem to be any resemblance between them except to the enlightened ones who are guided by the Divine light.

Those who associate partners with Allah cannot associate any partner with Him with regards to the things created in land; then how do they, in their imagination, associate partner with Allah in the heavens about which they have no knowledge at all.

Next, mankind has been admonished that the heavens and earth are not upheld in their orbits on their own. If the hand of Allah Almighty's will does not hold them and as a result, they deviate from their orbits then the heavens and earth would be destroyed and never ever again the heavenly bodies would be established in any orbits.

Notes: Fatir

Verse 11

مَنۡ كَانَ يُرِيۡدُ الۡعِزَّةَ فَلِلّٰهِ الۡعِزَّةُ جَمِيۡعًا ؕ اِلَيۡهِ يَصۡعَدُ الۡكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالۡعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرۡفَعُهٗ ؕ وَالَّذِيۡنَ يَمۡكُرُوۡنَ السَّيِّاٰتِ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ شَدِيۡدٌ ؕ وَمَكۡرُ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُوَ يَبُوۡرُ ﴿۱۱﴾

Some people deem it respectful for them to have contacts with worldly influential people. But the believers have been assured that honor comes only from Allah; and whatever endeavors their opponent makes to abase them in the world will go to waste.

Verse 33

ثُمَّ اَوۡرَثۡنَا الۡكِتٰبَ الَّذِيۡنَ اصۡطَفَيۡنَا مِنۡ عِبَادِنَا ۚ فَمِنۡهُمۡ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفۡسِهٖ ۚ وَمِنۡهُمۡ مُّقۡتَصِدٌ ۚ وَمِنۡهُمۡ سَابِقٌۢ بِالۡخَيۡرٰتِ بِاِذۡنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الۡفَضۡلُ الۡكَبِيۡرُ ﴿۳۳﴾

Step by step, three stages of the believers have been mentioned at this point. Firstly, those who have in them the filth of sin, and suppressing their self that incites to evil they tread on the path of Allah the Almighty; secondly, those who take the middle course; and thirdly, those who excel others in deeds of goodness.

Verse 46

وَلَوۡ يُؤَاخِذُ اللّٰهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوۡا مَا تَرَكَ عَلٰى ظَهۡرِهَا مِنۡ دَآبَّةٍ وَّلٰكِنۡ يُّؤَخِّرُهُمۡ اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ فَاِذَا جَآءَ اَجَلُهُمۡ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهٖ بَصِيۡرًا ﴿۴۶﴾

In the current verse sins have been associated to mankind but as a result thereof annihilation of animals is described? It does not mean that someone suffers for the sins of others. The truth of the matter is that in the case of annihilation of the animal kingdom the punishment is meted out to mankind, because human survival depends on cattle. Mankind will fail to survive if cattle are wiped out. *Daabbah* signifies all kinds of animals including reptiles.

36. Ya Seen: Introduction

Surah Ya Seen is a Meccan Surah, and including *Basmallah* it consists of eighty-four verses.

The disbelievers swear by strong oath is mentioned towards the end of the preceding Surah that if a Warner had come to them, they would have followed guidance better than any other past people. Addressing the Holy Prophet[sa] in the opening verses of Surah Ya Seen Allah the Almighty says that We have sent you to a people whose ancestors were not warned for a long time. Despite this fact the word of Allah came true for them that they would not believe. Thus, the claim of the disbelievers at the end of the preceding Surah that if a Warner had come to them, they definitely would have believed in him has been refuted in the current Surah.

Next, a similitude of the opponents of the Prophets has been presented that in fact it is their arrogance that keeps them from accepting guidance. An arrogant person's neck is erect like someone's neck that has a collar around it. Thus, only those are blessed to believe who are free of all arrogance.

Commentators have given different presumptions with regard to the discussion that starts from verse 14. In this regard Hazrat Hakeem Maulana Nuruddin, Khalifatul-Masih I (may Allah be pleased with him) has given a commentary that touches heart. And that is that the first two Prophets were Hazrat Moses[as] and Hazrat Jesus[as]. The Holy Prophet[sa] upheld their honor by supporting them. But after incessant disbelief of the disbelievers a fourth person stood up from a distant town to warn the disbelievers that they should believe in the great person who procures a number of means of their guidance without any reward from them.

At the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān the knowledge of Arabs with regard to male and female in plants was limited to date-palm only. And none could have even imagined that Allah the Almighty has created pairs not only in all fruit trees, but verse 37 claims that everything in the universe exists in pairs. The modern science of today has uncovered this reality; so much so that matter, atoms and even sub-atomic particles have their pairs. In short, the subject of pairs is an unending subject. And in order to understand the subject of Unity of God it is essential to understand this topic. It is only the Creator of the universe Who does not stand in need of a pair; rest every creation needs to be in pairs.

Addressing the subject of resurrection once again in a following verse the dead bodies who will be resurrected in the Hereafter have been shown expressing their wonder as to who he is who resurrected them. In reply to this it is stated that what all the Messengers of Allah said was true.

Some people believe that the topic of producing fire from green trees in verse 81 relates to the trees when they get dry and produce fire. This is true in its own right. But in reality, the green trees can produce fire while still they are green, and it happens as such. Thus, the botanists assert that when the leaves of pine trees touch each other as a result of wind, they catch fire due to this continuous action, and vast woodlands are destroyed because of this fire.

The last verse of the current Surah as well concludes at the discussion of resurrection in the Hereafter; which states that Allah is the only Master of everything in the universe and O mankind! you all will be brought back to him.

Notes: Ya Seen

Verses 9-10

اِنَّا جَعَلۡنَا فِیۡۤ اَعۡنَاقِہِمۡ اَغۡلٰلًا فَہِیَ اِلَی الۡاَذۡقَانِ فَہُمۡ مُّقۡمَحُوۡنَ ﴿۹﴾ وَجَعَلۡنَا مِنۡۢ بَیۡنِ اَیۡدِیۡہِمۡ سَدًّا وَّمِنۡ خَلۡفِہِمۡ سَدًّا فَاَغۡشَیۡنٰہُمۡ فَہُمۡ لَا یُبۡصِرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۰﴾

Apparently, the disbelievers do not have any collars, nor are all of them blind. Definitely they are metaphors, i.e., they are wearing collars round their necks that stop them from doing good deeds, and they are deprived of insight.

Verses 39-41

وَالشَّمۡسُ تَجۡرِیۡ لِمُسۡتَقَرٍّ لَّہَا ؕ ذٰلِکَ تَقۡدِیۡرُ الۡعَزِیۡزِ الۡعَلِیۡمِ ﴿۳۹﴾ وَالۡقَمَرَ قَدَّرۡنٰہُ مَنَازِلَ حَتّٰی عَادَ کَالۡعُرۡجُوۡنِ الۡقَدِیۡمِ ﴿۴۰﴾ لَا الشَّمۡسُ یَنۡۢبَغِیۡ لَہَاۤ اَنۡ تُدۡرِکَ الۡقَمَرَ وَلَا الَّیۡلُ سَابِقُ النَّہَارِ ؕ وَکُلٌّ فِیۡ فَلَکٍ یَّسۡبَحُوۡنَ ﴿۴۱﴾

The points raised in these verses about heavenly bodies are such which were beyond even the imagination of an illiterate in Arab. Everyday experience reveals that the moon and sun cannot get together. But why the moon wanes and then waxes? It is caused by orbiting. Furthermore, it was elaborated that the sun is moving on to its determined goal. One implication of this is that a time will come when the sun, having reached its determined time, will cease to exist. And another meaning which the modern space scientists have discovered is that the sun, along with its planets, is moving to a certain direction. It means that the entire universe is moving together; otherwise, one planet should have collided with another one. Despite the fact

that the entire universe is in motion the distances between the heavenly bodies are maintained. This is one of the latest discoveries of space scientists which, by the way, prove that there is another unknown universe by whose pull it is moving towards that one.

Verse 66

اَلْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلٰٓى اَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَآ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ اَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾

Man will be accountable not only according to the testimony of the angels on the Judgment Day, but the body parts of every individual will also confess their crimes. This also replies to the poetic imagination of Ghalib that 'they are unjustly held accountable because the angels wrote as such; was any of us was also present at the time of recording it? That day man himself will confess his crimes. The Quranic system of justice is very strong; it will provide witnesses as well as confession.

37. As-Saffat: Introduction

Surah As-Saffat is a Meccan Surah, and including *Basmallah* it consists of one hundred and eighty-three verses.

Before elaborating the initial verses of Surah As-Saffat it is important to mention that these verses state that by the time the mentioned prophecies are fulfilled this will also be proven to be true that the resurrection which was claimed very forcefully will definitely come to pass. As in verse 12 Allah the Almighty says (to the Prophet[sa]) to ask them whether it is they who are harder to create, or those others whom Allah the Almighty has created? After this question a flabbergasting declaration has been made for the disbelievers that being a creator Allah the Almighty is much beyond than that of their abilities to create; and possesses the power to revive them again once they will have become dust after their death. It contains a warning as well that once they are resurrected, they will be abased too. That is to say, it will be proven to those who used to make tall claims with regard to their creation that their creation stands nowhere; and that *ashaddu khalqan* (harder to create) is none else except Allah the Almighty.

Now we revert to the initial verses. The words, *was-Saffati Saffan* (by those who range themselves in close ranks), in fact contain a prophecy of war planes which will be made by man, and they will attack the enemies ranged in close ranks, warning them time and again and dropping on them large number of pamphlets containing the message to bow their necks before them or else they would be destroyed. Then Allah the Almighty says that how dare they claim divinity as a result of their superficial power. Allah is one and only.

Next, Allah says that He is the Lord of easts. This verse also implies a kind of prophecy. Otherwise, at that time there was no concept of more than one east as has been generated in this age of ours. In that age through various modern inventions capable of very high flight like rockets etc., man would endeavor to find out the secrets of higher skies; as such endeavors are being made in this age. But they would be pelted with stones from every side. That is to say, they would be pelted with very dangerous stones from heavenly bodies. Except getting some few secrets from the closer sky they would fail to achieve any major success. These are the things about which the current age and its modern inventions testify that it is coming to pass exactly the same way.

The wars, that are going to be fought between nations for material victories, are mentioned in the beginning of the Surah; therefore, the battles of the Holy Prophet[sa] and his companions, which were waged purely for the cause of Allah, have also been mentioned in the current Surah. In these battles sword was not raised to shed others' blood, but a group of companions was to be slaughtered like sacrificing cattle. This was in relation to that sacrifice of Hazrat Abraham[as] which he had made by agreeing to slaughter his own son. The belief of the commentators that a ram had stuck in a bush and Hazrat Ishmael[as] was released in lieu of that great sacrifice is a very absurd belief which is neither found in the Qur'ān nor in Hadith. How can a ram be greater in comparison to Hazrat Ishmael[as]? Hazrat Ishmael[as] was kept alive so that the world could witness that great sacrifice which was to take place in the time of the Holy Prophet[sa].

In relation to Surah As-Saffat where a number of assaulters, ranged in ranks, are mentioned earlier, at the end of this Surah the Holy Qur'ān states that real armies ranged in ranks belong to us only. Here the ranged armies of the Holy Prophet[sa] as well as the ranged angels who descended from heaven in ranks have been mentioned. Whose end result was none else that apparently these weak ranged in ranks battlers, whose enemy was much mightier that those, would be vanquished, but Allah's will overpowered and Allah and His men triumphed.

Notes: As-Saffat

Verses 7-9

اِنَّا زَيَّنَّا السَّمَآءَ الدُّنۡيَا بِزِيۡنَةِ ۨالۡكَوَاكِبِ ﴿۷﴾ وَحِفۡظًا مِّنۡ كُلِّ شَيۡطٰنٍ مَّارِدٍ ۚ ﴿۸﴾ لَا يَسَّمَّعُوۡنَ اِلَى الۡمَلَاِ الۡاَعۡلٰى وَيُقۡذَفُوۡنَ مِنۡ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ ﴿۹﴾

These verses also discuss the apparent system of the universe as to how the atmosphere of the earth burns to ashes the meteors in space incessantly moving towards the earth. As a result of its burning, it leaves a long trail of flames behind it. Similarly, it has also been stated that a time is going to come when man will try to get information about the universe, which could never have been imagined in that age. But traveling in safe rockets they will be pelted with stones from every side, and they will not be able to go beyond the lowest heaven. They will only be able to reach the closest heaven to some extent.

In spiritual terms it signifies satans in human form who pursue and try to guess the revelation with ill-intention. Satan can never even get close to the Divine revelation, but Satan in human form, like Samiri, succeeded to guess a little as to how people are awe-inspired by the revelation.

Verses 49-50

وَعِنۡدَهُمۡ قٰصِرٰتُ الطَّرۡفِ عِيۡنٌ ﴿۴۹﴾ كَاَنَّهُنَّ بَيۡضٌ مَّكۡنُوۡنٌ ﴿۵۰﴾

Definitely this is a metaphorical discussion; otherwise, to say about *Hūrs* as if they are sheltered eggs, makes no apparent sense. Like sheltered eggs are neat and clean, similarly, their spiritual companions will also be chaste and neat internally.

Verses 88-92

فَمَا ظَنُّكُمۡ بِرَبِّ الۡعٰلَمِيۡنَ ﴿۸۸﴾ فَنَظَرَ نَظۡرَةً فِى النُّجُوۡمِ ﴿۸۹﴾ فَقَالَ اِنِّىۡ سَقِيۡمٌ ﴿۹۰﴾ فَتَوَلَّوۡا عَنۡهُ مُدۡبِرِيۡنَ ﴿۹۱﴾ فَرَاغَ اِلٰٓى اٰلِهَتِهِمۡ فَقَالَ اَلَا تَاۡكُلُوۡنَ ﴿۹۲﴾

The word سَقِيۡمٌ here does not signify sick; because to do such a huge task thereafter, i.e., break their idols, would not have been possible by an ailing person. Another meaning of سَقِيۡمٌ is disgusted. Prophet Abraham[as] said that he was disgusted with them and their idols. Thereafter he turned towards breaking the idols.

Verse 103

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعۡىَ قَالَ يٰبُنَىَّ اِنِّىۡۤ اَرٰى فِى الۡمَنَامِ اَنِّىۡۤ اَذۡبَحُكَ فَانۡظُرۡ مَاذَا تَرٰى ؕ قَالَ يٰۤاَبَتِ افۡعَلۡ مَا تُؤۡمَرُ ۫ سَتَجِدُنِىۡۤ اِنۡ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الصّٰبِرِيۡنَ ﴿۱۰۳﴾

This verse relates the account of Prophet Abraham's (peace be on him) preparedness to apparently cut his son Ishmael for sacrifice. Abraham[as] didn't see one dream but he repeatedly saw the dream that he was sacrificing his son. But despite the fact that he understood it to be an apparent cutting, he didn't express to take the life of his son until he himself was ready for it of his own volition. As is mentioned in فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعۡىَ i.e., when he was old enough to run along with him and started to do hard work with him. But the interpretation of the dream was to leave Ishmael in a waterless barren valley. Thus, Allah the Almighty kept him from fulfilling the dream in the apparent way and informed him later that he had already fulfilled that dream.

Verse 108

وَفَدَيۡنٰهُ بِذِبۡحٍ عَظِيۡمٍ ﴿۱۰۸﴾

ذِبۡحٍ عَظِيۡمٍ(mighty sacrifice) implies the greatest of all the Prophets that made sacrifices in the way of Allah, i.e., the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), whose advent depended on the survival of Prophet Ishmael[as].

Verse 131

سَلٰمٌ عَلٰٓى اِلۡ يَاسِيۡنَ ﴿۱۳۱﴾

The word *Elyasin* is used in place of Elias in the current verse. One interpretation of it presented by the commentators is that there was three Elias, as the case of *Elyasin* cannot be used for less than three. But in Hebrew idiom, a plural case can also be used, out of respect, in place of a singular one. As in their books the name of the Holy Prophet[sa], Muhammadem is found in place of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) . Because Elijah (Elias) also made extraordinary sacrifice, for that reason he also has been mentioned with the plural case.

Note: To be continued in the next issues of the Ahmadiyya Gazette.

The Holy Prophet, an exemplary worshipper of Allah

May peace and blessings of Allah on him

Mnahil Khan, Manassas chapter, CVA

"Refuse to be content with just the knowledge of God but insist on experiencing his presence."-Kerri Weems

With the rapidly growing changes occurring in human life on a daily basis, there is a dire need for observance, perseverance, as well as practical application of multiplied efforts towards developing a bond and worshipping Allah in a way that it creates secure attachments with Him. However, a typical query that emerges amongst the masses is how to pray in a way that brings upon most effective results. No matter what age, or level of maturity, this question may arise in countless hearts, looking for a light toward the path of righteousness.

The journey towards heaven from earth may seem like a long and arduous one without proper guidance. However, the appropriate guidance has, is, and always will be present for humanity in the image of Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and his teachings. God created man as the best possible form of creation, instilling the utmost faculties that can enable people to become humble abodes of Allah. Nevertheless, this a tremendous responsibility on the shoulders of humankind. To fulfill this obligation divine guidance is needed, one that has been presented in the form of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) along with the Holy Qur'ān is the final guiding ray towards happiness for humanity both in this world and the next. The proper guidance for all of humanity has, is, and always will be present in the image of Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and his teachings. Hence, it is of the utmost importance to learn about the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and highlight the exemplification of his laudable life and exemplary form of worship.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) presented himself in a way that provided the best human values, displaying through his nature and creating a guiding path towards the people around him and his followers. Discovering the different aspects of his life indeed resulted in creating the real value and righteous path of humankind to follow upon. This path enlightened us in a way that reiterated again and again as to why he indeed is considered an exemplary worshiper of Allah and wanted his followers to be an image of all that is pure on earth. Maybe because

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was a representation of love. He provided nothing but love and respect for his family, loved ones, and strangers. He loved humanity as a whole, showing adoration towards the oppressed and the marginalized. However, a love that dominated throughout his heart and radiated from his body was the love of Allah. It was in his love for Allah that he embedded and professed due to which even to this day he remains and will remain, the prime example of worshipper for everyone else to imitate. The immense love that he entailed within himself found multitudes of expression through his worship. It was one of the most pleasurable aspects of life for him personally, as his devotion included a private and intimate conversation with Allah. His worship saw no end, never growing tired of his obedience and service. Hazrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) once stated:

"The Messenger of God would be speaking to us, and we would be speaking to him until the time for prayer would set it, and then it was as if he did not know us and we did not know him." Bihar al-Anwaar, Vol. 84, p. 257.

Gratitude, a word that is so simple yet has such a profound meaning. However, the real sense of this word was exhibited and sonorously displayed through the actions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). The expression of appreciation and gratitude was shown by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) to every individual who extended towards him even an ounce of kindness. Most of all, his whole life was devoted to the thanks His Creator for each favor bestowed upon him. In one of his narrations, it is stated:

> "Contemplate those who have less than you and not those who have more than you, lest you belittle the favors of Allah conferred upon you." (Bukhari and Muslim).

Even before taking upon the mantle of Prophethood, love and worship of his Lord possessed each and every fiber of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Starting from early childhood, and transitioning towards boyhood and youth, the Holy Prophet's life was the complete juxtaposition of the corrupt society that he was a member of. Never having engaged in any immoral, unethical or frivolous activities of his fellow citizens, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) took upon the option to solitary confinement in a cave called Hira where he would spend several days at a time with the sole purpose of worshipping and praying to his sole Creator. It indeed was in the cave of Hira, that the Holy Prophet received the divine invitation into the

ministry and religion of purity.

To many followers, worship might just be praying to Allah in the form of the five daily prayers however, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) negated this thought process that as much as prayers are vital for worship there are other aspects which need to be considered and added to follow in the footsteps of the exemplar of worship. As much as he loved the Almighty, the Holy Prophet honored the words of Allah just as much. The mere sound of the Holy Qur'ān being recited brought upon intense emotions to the point where his eyes would only be filled with tears. Whenever talking or listening to conversations about God his body and mind would saturate with passion, love, and devotion towards the Supreme Being. The passion reached heights where even his enemies in Makkah would often comment, 'Muhammad is intoxicated with the love of his Lord.'

The life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) could be considered a blank canvas that was thoroughly painted by his love, affection, and ultimate devotion to Allah. The responsibilities on his shoulders held a very heavy burden on his body and soul, where a large part of his life was spent trying to fulfill the duties presented upon him yet, the greater portion of his day and night was spent in the worship, remembrance, and praise of Allah Almighty. Leaving the comfort of his bed at midnight, burning the midnight oil all hours of the night and submitting himself to worship until it was time to go to the mosque for morning prayers is how Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) spent time in worship and recognition. Praying till the mat was wet with his own tears, till his chest heaved like that of an infant crying for his mother and standing so long that his feet were swollen and a source of extreme pain, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) stopped at nothing to ensure that he played his part in gaining approval of his Creator. His condition often brought upon concern and worry from those around him however when Hazrat 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) expressed a mild protest regarding the prolonged periods, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) answered:

> "If Allah has, by His Grace and Mercy, conferred His love and nearness upon me, is it not my duty in return to be always rendering thanks to Him?"

It has also been narrated that: One night, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) was in the home of one of his wives (Ummi Salamah). After a little of the night had passed, Umm-e-Salamah saw that the Messenger of God was not in bed. She got up and went looking for him. All of a sudden, she noticed that he was standing next to the room with his hands raised, his eyes full of tears and he was saying the following: "O God, don't take away the good you have given me. O God, don't please my enemies and those who are jealous of me. O God, don't allow their evil from which you saved me to come back. O God, don't leave me to myself, even for one moment."

At this point, Ummi Salamah began crying. The Prophet said, "Why are you crying, Ummi Salamah? She said, "May my father and mother be your sacrifice, why shouldn't I cry? Even though you have such a high station and the fact that God has forgiven your past and future sins, you talk to God in this way (it is more appropriate for us to fear God and to cry in His presence)."

The Prophet said, "How can I be safe when God left Prophet Jonas (peace be upon him) to himself for only a moment when that which afflicted him took place."

Through each and every single conversation regarding the topic an undeniable truth emerges like breath of fresh air. An irrefutable piece of truth presents itself time after time announcing that the Holy Prophet's devotion to Allah Almighty consisted only of truth, love and sincerity. His presence and actions explained the meaning of this universe and introduced our Creator with His names and attributes. If we know God in His true sense, it is only because of the will of Allah and through the actions and words of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Similarly, if we know that a perfect man exists it is through the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) himself, and how to be the perfect man and represent the universal values, it is again through his exemplary life.

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An Important Chapter in the History of Ahmadiyyat in Nigeria

Mohammad Ajmal Shahid

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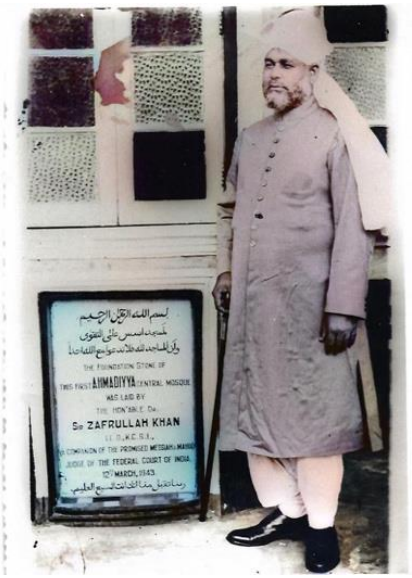
Translated from Urdu by Mohammad Ahmed Nasir, Baltimore, USA

Jamā'at Ahmadiyya was established in the West African country of Nigeria by one of the companions of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him), Hazrat Maulana Abdul Raheem Nayyar (may Allah be pleased with him), on the 11th of April 1921 when he arrived in Lagos, the then capital of Nigeria. He stayed there for two years and a fairly large Jamā'at was established. Later, he returned to London because of health reasons. After he left, the Jamā'at was not able to send any new missionaries for ten years and the local Jamā'at kept on working under the local Imam, Alhaj Shodeinde.

The appointment of Maulana Hakeem Fazl-ur-Rahman as Ahmadiyya missionary

The second missionary that was sent to Nigeria was Maulana Hakeem Fazl-ur-Rahman. He had worked before as a missionary in Ghana, and had stayed in Nigeria for a short period of time before going to Ghana.



Hazrat Maulawi 'Abd-ur-Rahim Dard (Allah be pleased with him) and Maulana Hakeem Fazl-ur-Rahman left for England and West Africa on 2 February 1933. (Al-Fazl, 5 February 1933. p. 1). His formal appointment was done in 1934 and he reached Lagos in July of the same year.

Unfortunately, Maulana Hakeem Fazl-ur-Rahman faced a strange situation while taking charge of the mission. As he was the representative of the central headquarters, he was an Imam and was responsible for the implementation of any instructions and orders coming from Markaz and Khilafat. For this purpose, the Friday sermon is ideal, but the local Jamā'at was not ready for this. They were of the opinion that the Friday Sermon and other religious duties will be done by the local Imam, as usual, and the representative of the center will be responsible for Tabligh. When the local Jamā'at remained adamant and refused to give the office of Imam to the missionary, Maulana Hakeem Fazl-ur-Rahman wrote to Khalifatul-Masih about this and asked for his guidance. The instructions that were given by the Khalifatul-Masih about this matter, to cooperate with the representative of the center, were ignored. The matter escalated from not obeying the missionary to rebellion against Khalifatul-Masih.

Litigation and court's decision in favor of Jamā'at

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam was registered in Nigeria as a branch of the international Jamā'at Ahmadiyya.

There was litigation between Jamā'at and opponents over a mosque in Lagos. The court gave a decision in favor of the Ahmadiyya Jamā'at in April 1934. (Al-Fazl, 22 April 1934, p. 2). The court trial was won under the able and sincere advocacy of Gabriel Martin, Barrister at law.

The Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Lagos held first annual convention on 13-14 October 1934 in which people from Lagos, Kano Ibadan, Port Harcott and representatives of many far-flung Jamā'ats participated. (Al-Fazl, 8 January 1935, p. 9, Tarikh-e-Ahmadiyyat, Vol. 6, p. 279)

50th Jubilee of establishment of Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Nigeria

I arrived in Lagos in March of 1972. This was the year when it had been half a century since the laying of the foundations of the Jamā'at in Nigeria. I decided to celebrate the Jubilee of Ahmadiyyat and compiled a program for it. I announced this program in a press conference. Important items in this program were:

- translation of the Qur'ān in Yoruba,

- building of a central mosque in Lagos,

- and establishment of new schools, hospitals, etc.

Saudi Embassy refused to issue visas to Ahmadis

1n 1974, the government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto declared Ahmadis as non-Muslims in Pakistan. Like the rest of the world, it also impacted Nigeria. One day there was news in the morning newspapers that "Ahmadis have attacked the Saudi Embassy." I knew

immediately that these are not members of our Jamā'at as we don't believe in any violence. Details made it clear that this was done by opponents of the Jamā'at. The Saudi government refused to issue them Hajj visas because they have been declared non-Muslims. These people then gave them an explanation that they are not part of "that Jamā'at Ahmadiyya." On hearing this the embassy suggested to them they should remove "Ahmadiyya" from their name; they can get a Hajj visa only if they change their name.

The Publicity of the name of "Ahmadiyya"

It was a heinous conspiracy to eradicate the name of Jamā'at in Nigeria. I immediately called in an emergency meeting of the National Amila. I explained that we are happy that they have given up the name and want to return to us because this name was given to Jamā'at by the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) and Islam's renaissance is attached to this name. I explained that those who want to eradicate the "Ahmadiyya" name, we need to fight against them with our full energy and resources. The best way to counter their plans is to publicize the Jamā'at name as much as possible. I suggested the following measures should be taken immediately:

1. Rebuttal of the Daily Times article should be published immediately. I gave this task to some Ahmadi scholars.
2. Facelifting of Mission House of Nigeria should be done immediately and on it the name of Jamā'at should be advertised in large and beautiful form.
3. Throughout the country, all missions, mosques, educational institutions, and medical facilities should install large sign boards displaying our name.
4. Other countries around Nigeria where Jamā'at is not established yet, we should try to spread the message of Ahmadiyyat there.
5. For Jamā'at, and specially for Khuddam, we should design such uniforms which prominently display Kalima and the Jamā'at name.
6. All Jamā'at vehicles should display this name prominently.

Al-Ḥamdu Lillāh, members of National Amila appreciated these suggestions. They not only openly displayed their dislike for our opponents' tactics but also ensured me of their full cooperation. The whole Jamā'at, with a new enthusiasm and energy, started to implement this program. Soon the Jamā'at name echoed across the country and those who wanted to eliminate this name failed miserably. Al-Ḥamdu Lillāh, the whole Jamā'at remained attached to Khilafat and many righteous souls joined Jamā'at. During that time Jamā'at Ahmadiyya's name emerged not only at national level, but Ahmadiyyat also took roots in nearby countries. In the Benin Republic, the first mosque by Jamā'at was built during these difficult times. In Togo, a new mosque was planned and built within a year. This was a practical, tangible rebuttal to those who wanted to destroy the Jamā'at name.

Alhaj Imam Shodeinde

The original name of Jamā'at "Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam" was used by the deniers of Khilafat for almost 35 years, then they themselves discarded and adopted the new name "Anwar-ul-Islam". At this point, Shodeinde and some other pioneers refused to accept this change as they wanted to remain attached to the name of Ahmadiyyat. At this point, Shodeinde contacted me. He was a tall, well-built, muscular man. I had heard a lot about him, but never met him personally. This was the first time that I met him and saw him closely. He embraced me with affection and a smiling face. In this very first meeting, he accepted all his previous mistakes and plainly said "I accept all our mistakes and admit that we made a huge mistake by not accepting Maulana Hakeem Fazl-ur-Rahman as representative of Khilafat. Had we accepted the orders by Khalifatul-Masih at that time we would not have seen this day. We accepted Ahmadiyyat at the hands of Maulana Nayyar and remained attached to Ahmadiyyat even after he had to leave. We still want to remain attached to Ahmadiyyat and don't want to associate with those who have discarded the name of Ahmadiyyat."

I congratulated him on making this decision and told him that those who decided to attach themselves to Jamā'at, the doors of Jamā'at are always open to them. Also, it is better for him to write a letter of repentance to Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih. After the Promised Messiah (peace be on him), the spiritual institution of Khilafat has been established and its obedience is a must. As they have made a grave mistake earlier by not accepting the orders of Khalifatul-Masih, now they need to amend the mistake by approaching Khalifatul-Masih for forgiveness. On this, he said he will discuss it with his group. This meeting ended on a very amicable note. Later, Al-Haj Shodeinde occasionally visited me and also attended some Jamā'at events, but did not join the Jamā'at formally.

Later in 1988, when Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV visited Nigeria, Al-Haj Shodeinde met with him with his group of friends. He asked if they wanted to pledge allegiance as a group. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV didn't accept this and mentioned that pledge of allegiance is always taken from an individual but not from a group. There can't exist a Jamā'at within Jamā'at. In short,

Alhaj Shodeinde had a soft corner for Jamā'at in his heart and didn't want to leave and didn't want to join others who have abandoned the name of Ahmadiyyat, but the fact is that he didn't have the obedience in him that is needed to pledge allegiance. So, despite accepting his mistake, he was not able to join the Jamā'at.

Campaign against Jamā'at Ahmadiyya

As I have mentioned before, in 1974 a global campaign against the Jamā'at was launched. It also affected Muslim majority Nigeria. With the help of the Saudi Arabian government there was lots of opposition against Jamā'at in Nigeria. Every other day some article will be published in newspapers against us. It was just Allah's mercy and blessing that it didn't have any effect on the Jamā'at. On the contrary, Jamā'at members faced all this with a new zeal.

During that time, one day early in the morning some senior Jamā'at members came to meet me. This was led by Alhaj Sanyaolu, who was a respected and enthusiastic member of Jamā'at. He was also a very good translator. Whenever Khulafa-e-Masih visited Nigeria, he was responsible for translation, and he would perform his duties diligently. When he came to meet me with his friends, it was unusual, so I was a bit surprised. I welcomed them and asked for the reason for their visit. In his usual style he smiled and said, "Ameer, through you, we want to send a message to all the opponents of Jamā'at in the world in general and opponents in Nigeria in particular , that they started the opposition very late. They should have started earlier. Had they started earlier when Ahmadiyyat was in early stages in Nigeria, it is possible that it could have affected us. But now that we have recognized the Jamā'at and completely understand its working, the lies of our opponents have no effect on us. And we want to tell them openly, that they would never succeed in their efforts."

I really appreciated their enthusiasm and thanked them for their support.

Today Ahmadiyya Jamā'at means only one Jamā'at in Nigeria which is under Khilafat and is progressing day by day. Al-Ḥamdu Lillāh.

A Study of the origins and features of Easter

This article looks at the various traditions and celebrations that have gradually become a part of Easter, and examines their origins, what place they have, if any, according to the scriptures and the teachings of Jesus (peace be on him) and the significance of the days leading up to Easter.

Easter procession in Kurks, Russia – painting by Ilya Repin (1880-83)

While the emphasis is religious, Easter has become so heavily commercialized these days that the start of spring sparks supermarkets to load the aisles with Easter cards, Easter bunnies, Easter eggs, Easter bonnets, Easter foods and spring daffodils. But for many devout Christians, the real focus of Easter is on Jesus' (peace be on him) resurrection and their belief that he died on the cross, so that their own sins could be forgiven.

Easter is the most important time of the year for Christians. In preparation for this day, many Christians around the world observe some or all of the special days associated with it, beginning with Shrove Tuesday (also known as Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras), Ash Wednesday, followed by the forty-day period of abstinence or fasting known as Lent. This period concludes with Holy Week;(Palm Sunday and Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday), Triduum – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Saturday, – with the last day being Easter Sunday.

Shrove Tuesday: Pre-Lenten confession and celebration

Shrove Tuesday is the first Tuesday before Ash Wednesday and became the last day for celebrating and feasting before the 40-day Lenten period of fasting. It takes its name from the word "shrive," or to confess. On Shrove Tuesday, Christians confess their sins and ask God for forgiveness after the evening prayer, ushering in the advent of Lent.

> "In medieval England a priest would hear a confession and, in theory if not in practice, write down, or prescribe, an appropriate penance. After absolution, the person was said to have been shriven." (1)

However, since Lent is a time of abstinence, of giving up one's favorite things, many see Shrove Tuesday as the last chance to indulge, and to use up the foods that are not allowed in Lent, such as meat, fats, eggs, milk and

fish. In the Middle Ages, as the food storage systems were not adequate and to avoid wasting the foods to be abstained from in Lent, people would hold big feasts on Shrove Tuesday. In England, the tradition of eating pancakes originated because this was the best way to consume as much milk, fats and eggs as possible before Ash Wednesday. In France, this day came to be known as Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras, because it was a day of consumption of all fats and fatty foods. Shrove Tuesday was also the last opportunity for eating meat, the Latin for which is carnis: flesh, hence 'carnival' and similar words in other languages, became associated with Shrove Tuesday.

Mardi Gras or Fat Tuesday is a half secular, half religious holiday of revelry that grew up among Mediterranean-based Catholics in anticipation of the austerities that would commence on Ash Wednesday. (2)

Over the years, that revelry has increased. In Europe Mardi Gras celebrations include the wearing of flamboyant masks and costumes during the carnivals. The carnival in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) includes balls, pageants, and parades with hundreds of dancers dressed in vibrant costumes. In New Orleans, Mardi Gras is also celebrated during parades featuring large floats, followed by throngs of people dressed as eccentric characters. The emphasis of the day is on eating, drinking and dancing, as well as practical jokes and humorous street plays.

Ironically, for many people around the world Shrove Tuesday has evolved into a day of extravagant indulgence, but for devout worshippers the focus remains on confession of one's sins, repentance and prayer. There are no instructions in the Bible or from Jesus (peace be on him) to observe this day.

Ash Wednesday – A universal day of penitence marked by Ashes

Shrove Tuesday is followed by Ash Wednesday. This marks the beginning of the Lenten season when special services are held in Churches. In preparation for this service the priest makes blessed Holy Ashes, by burning palm crosses from the previous year's Palm Day service. The Ashes are mixed with Holy water to make a paste. When worshippers go to church on Ash Wednesday, the priest dips his thumb in the Ash paste and marks the sign of a cross on each worshipper's forehead. For Christians ashes are a symbol of remorse for their wrong doings, which they want to be rid of forever. It is also a reminder to them that "we all come from ashes, and to ashes we all will return." (3) The marking on the forehead with ash marks their commitment to Jesus Christ and God, and is a symbol of repentance for the wrong things Christians think they have done in the past year.

This was the practice in Rome for penitents to begin their period of public penance on the first day of Lent. They were sprinkled with ashes, dressed in sackcloth and obliged to remain apart until they were reconciled with the Christian community on Maundy Thursday, the Thursday before Easter. When these practices fell into disuse (8th–10th century), the beginning of Lent was symbolized by placing ashes on the heads of the entire congregation. The observation of Ash Wednesday in the Roman Catholic Church includes fasting, abstinence from meat and repentance, a day of contemplation of one's transgressions. (4)

Some have linked this Holy day to sorrowful repentance by sprinkling oneself with ashes as mentioned in the Old Testament: 2 Samuel 13:19; Esther 4:1; Isaiah 58; 5 Job 2:8; Daniel 9:3; Jonah 3:6.

Inside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where Jesus (peace be on him) was thought to have been crucified and buried. Biblical and historical evidence prove Jesus (peace be on him) did not die on the cross.

And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colors that [was] on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying. (2 Samuel 13:19)

When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; (Esther 4:1)

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? [is it] to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes [under him]? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? (Isaiah 58; 5)

> And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. (Job 2:8)
>
> And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. (Daniel 9:3)
>
> For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered [him] with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. (Jonah 3:6.)

However, these references cannot be used to justify

the practice of creating a new day called Ash Wednesday. The Old Testament clearly illustrates how early Christians grieved sorrowfully by covering themselves in ashes, or by wearing handmade garments of sackcloth covered in Ashes, not by having a little Holy Ash cross marked on their forehead by a priest or minister.

Lent – A season of prayer, penance and self – discipline

The word "Lent" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word lencten, which means spring, derived from the Anglo-Saxon word lenctentid, referring to the lengthening days in spring. This is a season of fasting observed by Catholics and other non-Catholic denominations. (5)

Christians observe Lent by fasting and by trying to abstain from sin and vice. The Church instructs Christians to seek penance by being remorseful for their sins and turning to God. The aim of the Church is to enable Christians to understand how fasting and maintaining self-discipline during Lent will enable the worshipper to gain the self control needed to purify the heart and renew one's life. (6)

It is of interest to note that Lent was not observed by the church in the first century. Scholars dispute whether Lent was first mentioned in the Council of Nicea in (325 AD), when Emperor Constantine officially recognized the church as the Roman Empire's state religion. According to the Encyclopedia of the early church, "Lent is mentioned for the first time in 334, by Athanasius," (7) Any other forms of Christianity that held doctrines different from the Roman Church were considered to be enemies of the state. In 360, the Council of Laodicea officially commanded that Lent be observed, and by the end of the fourth century the 40 day fast was observed everywhere, not only by those who were to be baptized, but all Christians preparing themselves for Easter. (8)

Originally, people did not observe Lent for more than a week. Some kept it for one or two days. Others kept it for 40 consecutive hours in the false belief that only 40 hours had elapsed between Jesus' (peace be on him) death and his resurrection, according to Christian doctrine. Eventually, Lent became a 40-day period of fasting or abstaining from certain foods.

> "The emphasis was not so much on the fasting as on the spiritual renewal that the preparation for Easter demanded. It was simply a period marked by fasting, but not necessarily one in which the faithful fasted every day. However, as time went on, more and more emphasis was laid upon fasting…During the early centuries (from the fifth century on especially) the observance of the fast was very strict. Only one meal a day, toward evening was allowed: flesh meat and fish, and in most places even eggs and dairy products, were absolutely forbidden. Meat was not even allowed on Sundays." (9)

But from the ninth century onward, Lent's strict rules saw a gradual relaxation. Greater emphasis was given to performing "penitential works," rather than to fasting and abstinence. According to the apostolic constitution Poenitemini of Pope Paul IV (Feb. 17, 1966), 'abstinence is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays of the year that do not fall on holy days of obligation, and fasting as well as abstinence is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.' (10)

Christians observe Lent in different ways; some people may abstain from indulgent foods and others may abstain from a normal part of their daily routine, to remind themselves of the sacrifice Jesus (peace be on him) made for them. Some people stop "eating out" during Lent, and then donate the money they would have spent to charity.

There is absolutely no reference to Lent in the Old or New Testaments, nor any reference of Jews or Christians observing an annual fasting period of 40 days before the Passover. Those who practice it justify its observation by linking the repentance and fasting of forty days, with references relating to the number forty.

> And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. (Gen 7:12)
>
> And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. (Exodus 34:28)
>
> After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, [even] forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, [even] forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. (Numbers 14:34)
>
> And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. (Jonah 3:4)
>
> And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year. (Ezekiel 4:6)
>
> And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. (1 Kings 19:8)

According to the New Testament, Jesus (peace be on him) never observed Lenten fasting, neither did he command or teach his apostles to do so. However, Christians believe that the duration of Lent can be

identified with Jesus' (peace be on him) time spent in the wilderness.

> And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days, he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, if thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, it is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, it is said, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. (Luke 4:1-13)

During Lent Christians commemorate the time when Jesus (peace be on him) retired to the desert to fast and pray, before beginning his work for God. It also is a remembrance of when Jesus (peace be on him) was tempted by Satan, but was able to successfully resist and remained steadfast and thus succeeded in the eyes of God.

Clearly, the above references do not instruct that a new season of Lent should be created, so how did this come into Christianity? "The Roman Church developed a high mass for celebrating the resurrection of Christ, but attached to it much of the paganism of the spring festival. Included in this process was the forty-day season of fasting known as "Lent," adopted by Rome during the sixth century. It corresponds to a forty day fast practiced by ancient Egyptians. Others identify Lent with a practice among Babylonian worshippers of Semiramis. The death and resurrection of Tammuz, was celebrated by a great annual festival preceded by the Lenten fast." (11)

The question arises that if the Roman church was aware that the observation of Lent was not an inherent part of the Biblical teaching nor of Jesus' (peace be on him) practice, then why did they constitute a pagan holiday? Many hold the view that the Christian Church amalgamated the festivals in the hope of subtly integrating Christianity into the nation at large. Its origin is the pre-festival fast, which was also observed at this time of year, by those being initiated into the Christian community.

Mothering Sunday– A Day of rest on the fourth Sunday of Lent

This is celebrated in England on the fourth Sunday of Lent. (In other parts of the world this day is also known as Mother's Day, often celebrated on a different date). Over the centuries Mothering Sunday became an important day for people to return to their home or "mother" church at least once a year, in the middle of Lent. It is uncertain where the name 'Mothering Sunday' originated. 'A possible explanation is that the Pope said Mass on that day at the basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (Holy Cross in Jerusalem), which contained the relics of the Holy Cross acquired in Jerusalem by Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great. The epistle quoted St Paul's reference to the heavenly Jerusalem 'mother of us all', – Galatians 4:26. In the same way, the local cathedral, mother church of the diocese, was the focus of worship on this Sunday…Whatever the reason, this Sunday was associated in people's minds with the idea of 'Mother'. Consequently, it became customary in England for servants and apprentices to be given time off to attend the church where they had been baptized, with their families. They presented their mothers with a cake made of eggs, butter, simnel and the finest flour; ingredients which were not otherwise used in Lent. (12)

It is thought that this day could have been adapted from the annual spring festival held in honor of the Greek Goddess Rhea, or from the Roman spring festival dedicated to Cybele. Cybele was often referred to as the mother of the Gods; the Greeks identified her with Rhea the mother of most Olympian Gods. (13)

The days before Jesus' crucifixion

Fabergé eggs were commissioned by Czar Alexander III of Russia as an Easter surprise for his wife Maria Feodorovna

Holy Week is the final week of Lent before Easter. It commemorates the events immediately preceding the crucifixion and the last week of Jesus' (peace be on him) life. This is the most solemn period during the church year. Christians devoutly observe this week, commemorating the Passion and Jesus' (peace be on him) death on the cross. Holy Week observances began in Jerusalem in the earliest days of the Church, when devout Christians travelled to Jerusalem to re-enact events of the week prior to Jesus (peace be on him) crucifixion. (The earliest days of the church were during the first centuries after the time of Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) when Paul constituted the church and it was being formed; over the centuries the fathers, then the popes took over; later, the denominations crept in with their own views. But the main body is the Catholic Church.)

The Holy Week marks the final days of Jesus (peace be on him) before Easter Sunday. It consists of: Palm Sunday, Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday, Holy Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The final three days are part of the Easter or paschal Triduum. Holy Week originated during the 2nd century. Two masses took place in the Early Church; one to reconcile sinners to God and the other to commemorate communion. By the 3rd century, the Great Vigil started and became the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Holy Week was first called "Great Week" by the Greeks in the second half of the 3rd century. Around the 4th century "Holy Week" was given its name by the Archbishop of Alexandria and the Bishop of Constantia. (The term "Holy Week" is a recent title; previously this was known as Passion Week.) (14)

Palm Sunday – This is the Sunday before Easter on which day an annual "procession of the palms" is held, in memory of Jesus' (peace be on him) entry into Jerusalem. This day reminds Christians of the journey Jesus (peace be on him) made into Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish festival of Passover (Pesach). On his arrival, people welcomed Jesus (peace be on him) by shouting, waving palm branches and throwing branches down in the path of the donkey which he rode. (Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11) It is believed that Palm Sunday originated in Jerusalem:

> "According to Ergia's 4th century account of the Holy week celebrations in Jerusalem, the people of Jerusalem were led to re-enact this event at the spot where it had actually happened. The faithful of Jerusalem gathered around their Bishop on the Mount of Olives…they set out carrying olive palm branches in their hands, accompanying the bishop who was seated on a mule, to the church of the resurrection…from Jerusalem this custom made its way into the churches. By the Middle Ages the rite of the palms had acquired a distinctly dramatic form." (15)

Over the centuries the church blessed this custom and they continue to celebrate this day by re-enacting it. In countries where worshippers cannot re-enact the events, they are given small crosses made from palm leaves, which they keep in their homes all year round as a symbol of their faith. The Church keeps any palm crosses which are left over until the following year, when they burn them to use their ashes for a special service on Ash Wednesday.

Holy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday – These are the three days when the Church reflects on the last days of Jesus' (peace be on him) earthly life. These days are commemorated through various church services, where hymns and scriptures are recited, following the same cycle of events recorded in the story of the Passion, as told by the Evangelists. In the home, Christians are meant to spend more time focusing on prayer, during this period. Most families also use this time for spring cleaning. It is said that cleaning the house during these days is similar to the Jewish tradition of cleaning before the Pesach.

The Easter Triduum

The Triduum (three days), referred to as The Paschal Triduum, the Holy Triduum or Easter Triduum, begins on the evening of Holy Thursday and ends on the evening of Easter Day. According to Catholics, the death of Jesus (peace be on him) cannot be separated from his resurrection:

> "Christ redeemed humankind and gave perfect glory to God principally through his paschal mystery: dying he destroyed our death and rising he restored our life. Therefore, the Easter triduum of the passion and resurrection of the Lord is the culmination of the entire liturgical year. Thus, the solemnity of Easter has the same kind of pre-eminence in the liturgical year that Sunday has in the week. The Easter triduum of the passion and resurrection of the Lord begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday, the Sunday of the Lord's resurrection." (16)

The Triduum is observed for three days to celebrate the heart of the Christian faith: salvation, redemption, the death and resurrection of Jesus (peace be on him). However, many Protestant churches do not recognize the Triduum as liturgical, and observe Lent until the Easter Vigil begins.

Holy or Maundy Thursday – The Easter Triduum begins with Mass on Holy Thursday evening. This day

commemorates the final Passover Jesus (peace be on him)celebrated as his last supper, with his disciples. Some of the early Christians debated whether to keep the date of Easter separate from the week-long Jewish festival of Passover, which celebrates the Exodus and freedom of the Israelites from ancient Egypt. It is believed that "the Last Supper" was in reality "the Seder meal", which marks the start of Passover.

For Christians this Holy day marks four key events; the washing of the feet of the disciples by Jesus Christ, the institution of the Last Supper, the agony of Jesus (peace be on him) in Gethsemane and the betrayal by Judas Iscariot. The re-enactment of the washing of the feet takes place in many churches, and in Britain monarchs customarily washed the feet of a selected group of poor people. Holy Thursday is also the traditional day for a thorough cleaning of the church altar and everything associated with it. Most churches celebrate communion on Maundy Thursday. 17 There are no instructions in the Bible about the observance of Holy Thursday, nor did Jesus (peace be on him) instruct his disciples to observe this day.

Good Friday –The celebration of Good Friday is according to some historians, a custom which originated in the 4th century. Over the centuries, the day gradually became a time of penance and fasting, at the anniversary of the crucifixion and (according to Christians) the death of Christ. Many churches hold quiet services from noon until three (called Tre Ore or Three Hours). This service focuses on the words Jesus (peace be on him) uttered as he hung on the cross; i.e., Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?, which means, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Mt 27:46

> Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. (Luke 23:34)
>
> And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (Luke 23:46)
>
> After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.(John 19:28)
>
> When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, it is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. (John 19:30)

Another tradition is to venerate the cross by kissing a crucifix on Good Friday. As mentioned previously, Good Friday is a somber time in the Catholic Church, thus there are no flowers, and the altar, the chancel, statues, pictures and the cross, are all draped in black to represent mourning.

However, once again, there are no biblical teachings that direct Christians to celebrate Good Friday. Not all Christians do so, with some churches refraining from communion until Resurrection Sunday.

Holy Saturday – This is the last day of the Triduum in the Holy Week and the 40-day Lenten Fast, which commemorates Jesus (peace be on him) lying in the tomb. Holy Saturday is a day to be observed as quietly as possible.

This day is also known as the 'day of the entombed Christ', when Christians reflect on the passion, suffering and death of Jesus (peace be on him), and how he was finally laid to rest in his tomb. No services are held on this day; the worshippers spend the day quietly reflecting and this leads them to the Easter Vigil.

The Easter Vigil – On this night Christians all over the world will gather in the dark, the darkness representing their somber reflections of the day. The Easter Vigil is the high point of the Easter Triduum, which St. Augustine called 'Mother of all Holy Vigils.' Initially, this vigil was held in the morning, but this was restored to the liturgy in 1951 by Pius XII, who thought it was appropriate to restore the feast of Easter to its proper place in the life of the Church. (18)

The reason why this vigil takes place during the night is because it is believed to coincide with Jesus' (peace be on him) resurrection, which also occurred during the night. During this night, worshippers silently pray and focus on the hours when they believe Jesus (peace be on him) slowly came back to life. They also celebrate his profound sacrifice for their sins.

The Easter Vigil rites begin with the lighting of a new flame or fire, which represents Jesus' (peace be on him) return from the darkness of death, bringing with him the new light of hope and salvation through his resurrection. Some churches use a special Paschal Candle for this part of the service, which is then used for lighting the individual candles of every worshipper, while they sing the Easter proclamation. The Easter Vigil also includes the recitation of some readings provided by the church and the blessing of the water for baptism. It also includes

the baptism of new members wishing to be initiated into the church, who receive the Eucharist for the first time. After this, everyone rejoices in the resurrection of Jesus (peace be on him), and celebrate Easter Day.

The rituals and traditions of Holy Week, appear to have entered Christian practice long after the demise of Jesus (peace be on him). One therefore has to question the significance placed on the rites performed, and their relevance to the teachings of Jesus (peace be on him).

Easter Day

Sunrise Service – While this custom is not practiced by all Christians, some will participate in 'the Easter Sunrise Service,' when worshippers rise before dawn on Easter Day and go to an elevated place or to the side of a church, and face towards the rising sun. After the sun rises, the worshippers sing an Easter hymn praising the resurrection of Jesus (peace be on him), whilst holding spring flowers. They close this service by holding hands and praying together, and then proceed home to prepare for church services.

The Old Testament mentions a similar practice in Ezekiel 8:1-18, where Ezekiel saw that the people of Israel were facing towards the east when the sun rose and worshipping the sun. This was strictly forbidden, as it constituted sun-worship. But this is exactly what worshippers do in the Easter Sunrise Service. If Jesus (peace be on him)did not instruct this kind of worship then where did it come from?

> "The sunrise service originates not in Christianity but in the Pagan rites of spring. Sunrise services are not unrelated to the Easter fires held on the tops of hills in continuation of the New Year fires, a worldwide observance in antiquity. Rites were performed at the vernal equinox, welcoming the sun and its great power to bring new life to all growing things." (19)

On Easter Sunday churches are decorated with flowers to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus (peace be on him), likening it to the flowers blossoming in the spring. The 'Easter lily' flower also crept into Christianity much later, again with no basis in scripture or the teachings of Jesus (peace be on him).

Easter – also known as Pascha, is a spring festival which is celebrated on the Sunday following holy week. Easter celebrates the central event of the Christian faith: the resurrection of Jesus (peace be on him) three days after his crucifixion. Easter is the oldest Christian holiday and the most important day of the church year. All the Christian movable feasts and the entire liturgical year of worship, are arranged around Easter which is followed by a fifty days Easter season (Easteride) which extends to the Pentecost.

On Easter day Christians celebrate and rejoice Jesus' (peace be on him) sacrifice of his life to free mankind from sin. It is widely believed amongst the Christian world that Jesus (peace be on him) was the sacrificial lamb offered at the Passover as mentioned in Exodus 12:13-14. According to the biblical account of this first Passover, the Israelites marked their doors with the blood of a lamb to prevent the Angel of Death killing their first born; their doors were therefore literally "passed over." Jewish temples began to sacrifice lambs ritually to mark the Passover. It was only the blood of the slain lamb that protected each Israelite home, while Egypt suffered the plague of death, the Israelites were spared death by obeying God's command and by faith in His promise to protect them. Following this, the Jews celebrated the Passover meal in remembrance of God's Mercy. In keeping with the tradition of the Old Testament Jewish laws, which Jesus (peace be on him) devoutly followed, he also observed the Passover.

From the Biblical accounts of the New Testament, it is determined that Jesus (peace be on him)was put on the cross when he was observing the feast of the Passover (Matthew 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-16, Luke 22:7-15, John 18:28,39, 19:14). But Jesus (peace be on him) did not predict or indicate that this would happen. So where does the concept of Jesus (peace be on him) atoning for the sins of mankind as the paschal or sacrificial Lamb originate? It emerged from the Christians celebrating the death of Jesus (peace be on him) with a Paschal meal (Eucharist), on the lunar date of the Jewish Passover:

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Corinthians. 5:7-8. (20)

These verses prove that it was Paul's teaching to replace the Old Testament Passover. His New Testament concept of the Passover allowed Christ to supersede the paschal lamb. Despite Paul's claims to love and honor Jesus (peace be on him), he did not hesitate to replace the Old Testament Passover (which Jesus (peace be on him) and his disciples followed), with his new concept.

According to the New Testament accounts of the evangelists, the resurrection should have been celebrated on the first Sunday after the Jewish Passover. However, 'controversy surrounded the determination of the date of Easter from the 2nd Century to the 8th century' (21). After centuries of debate the Council of Nicea finally fixed the date of Easter to A.D. 325, i.e., to fall on the first Sunday after the full moon, on or after the vernal equinox (March 21). This means that Easter can be observed anywhere between March 22 and April 25. The Council was also responsible for separating the celebration of Easter from the Jewish Passover, probably because over

the years Easter did not fall on a Sunday in accordance with the Jewish Passover, (the Sunday after the spring equinox rather than the biblically directed 14 Nisan in the Jewish Calendar), and the Church wanted to keep the observance of Easter day on a Sunday in line with the biblical account of Jesus' (peace be on him) resurrection on a Sunday. Not only was a new date selected for the celebration of Passover, but a new theme was introduced – Easter replaced Passover – and an official day was designated to commemorate the Resurrection.

The word "Easter" represents the festival observed by many Christian churches in honor of the resurrection of the Savior. Easter is a word used in Germanic languages to denote the festival of the vernal equinox. (22) The word Easter is not found anywhere in the Old or New Testament, except for one reference in the King James Bible.

> And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people (Acts 12.4). (23)

After reading the above one may assume that the festival of Easter may have been observed during the time of the apostles. According to the New Bible dictionary, the original word in the above translation has no reference to that, nor is there any evidence that any such festival was observed at the time when this book was written. The original word should have been 'Passover' (Pascha) not 'Easter.' (24)

The word Paschal used to describe many things associated with Easter, itself derives from Pascha the Greek/Latin transliteration of Pesach, the Hebrew word for Passover.

As the observation of Easter is not instructed in the Bible, then where did Easter originate?

Scholars agree that the name Easter has its roots in Paganism. It is never used in original scriptures and its exact origin remains uncertain; according to Bede it is connected with an Anglo-Saxon spring goddess. (25) The time, the customs, and the traditions of Easter all come from ancient pagan, non-Christian, religious celebrations. Thus, Easter was originally a pagan festival in honor of the Goddess of Spring. The word "Easter" is supposed to be derived from "Eostre or "Eastre." Eostre was the deity of both the dawn and spring, and "the pagan symbol of fertility." At her festival in April, sacred fires were lighted on the hills especially in the Nordic lands. (During this same season, the ancient Romans observed the Feast of the Vernal Equinox.) (26)

Even though it is quite evident that Easter was clearly pagan in origin, it was the early Christian leaders of the first two centuries after Jesus' (peace be on him) crucifixion who created this festival. It was probably easier for them to draw pagan worshippers into Christianity by having it coincide with the spring resurrection feast of the pagans. Over the centuries, Easter celebrations have also supplemented many more customs, mainly incorporated from springtime fertility celebrations. Hot Cross Buns stemmed from the pagan festival which had the Saxon fertility Goddess sacrifice an ox. Thus, the horns in the form of a cross became a symbol of the season, carved into breads. The cross represented the moon, the heavenly body associated with the Goddess and its four quarters. As Christianity spread throughout Europe, buns were made in the traditional method, but the cross now symbolized the crucifix of Jesus (peace be on him). The Easter Bunny and eggs both represent fertility. Dyed eggs were also used as part of the rituals of the Babylonian religions. In the pagan spring and fertility festivals eggs were painted and given as gifts. Eggs represented fertility and to be given one was to wish children upon the receiver. (27) None of these Pagan traditions have any relevance to Biblical teachings. Moreover, in accordance with the Old Testament such practices should never be adopted:

> "Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, how did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing so ever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." (Deuteronomy 12:30-32) (28)

Conclusion

There is no celebration of any Christian holidays in the New Testament. Easter was not observed by the early followers of Jesus (peace be on him), nor by those who believed that they should follow the command of the Bible rather that of men. Unfortunately, over the centuries, pagan rituals have become so deeply embedded in society, that it is now generally assumed that they are Christian in origin. However, the Christians who do not follow the pagan customs and traditions associated with Easter, celebrate the resurrection of Jesus (peace be on him) at Easter by focusing on the resurrection narrative as mentioned by the evangelists. The one important verse which strikes many Christians is:

> For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so, shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Matt. 12:40).

Many Christians accept that this was the one sign

that Jesus (peace be on him) gave as proof that he was the Messiah, that he would be in the grave exactly three days and three nights. They take this verse as evidence that Jesus (peace be on him) was resurrected. Regarding this, Hadrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih IV(may Allah shower His mercy on him) has said:

> "We prove from the Bible that God did not abandon him and saved him from the ignoble death upon the cross. This can be studied in the light of the facts relating to the period before the Crucifixion, as well as the facts of the Crucifixion itself and after it, as related by the New Testament."

Long before that incident, Jesus (peace be on him) promised that no sign would be shown unto the people other than the sign of Jonah:

> Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, 'Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.' He answered, 'a wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. (Matthew 12:38–41)

"So, before we determine what happened to Jesus (peace be on him), we must understand what happened to Jonah, because Jesus (peace be on him) claimed that the same miracle would be repeated. What was the Sign of Jonah? Did he die in the belly of the fish and was he later on revived from death? There is unanimity among all Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars that Jonah did not die in the belly of the fish. He precariously hung between life and death and was miraculously saved from that situation, while any other person in his place would have died. Yet some subtle laws of nature, under the Divine command, must have conspired together to save him from death. Remember, we are not debating the issue of that being possible or not. We are only pointing out that Jesus (peace be on him), when he pointed out that the like of what happened to Jonah would also happen to him, he could only have meant that what everyone understood to have occurred in the case of Jonah would occur in his case. No one in the entire world of Judaism, whether in the land of Judea or anywhere else the Jews had dispersed and settled, would have received a different message from this claim of Jesus (peace be on him). They all believed that Jonah, miraculously or otherwise, survived for three days and nights in the belly of the fish and did not die in that period for a single moment. Of course, we have our own reservations regarding this view. The story of Jonah as told to us in the Qur'an does not mention anywhere that it was for three days and nights that Jonah suffered his trials in the belly of the fish. However, we return to the case in point and try to bring to light the actual similarities which were predicted by Jesus Christ between Jonah and himself. Those similarities spoke clearly of spending three days and nights in extremely precarious circumstances and a miraculous revival from near death, and not of coming back to life from the dead. The same, Jesus (peace be on him) claimed, would happen in his case." (29)

Careful examination of the biblical texts clearly indicates how Jesus (peace be on him) survived death on the cross. He was not God who became a man, he did not die on the cross for the sins of mankind, and he had no desire to do so. He was not resurrected from death on the cross because he did not die.

If correctly understood and applied, the resurrection of Jesus (peace be on him) cannot mean the return of his soul to the same human body it had deserted at the moment of death. The term 'resurrection' only means the creation of a new astral body. Such a body is spiritual in nature and works as a sort of crucible for a rarefied soul within. It is created for the eternal continuation of life after death. Some call it a sidereal body or astral body, and some call it athma. Whatever name you give it, the essential meaning remains the same; resurrection applies to the creation of a new body for the soul which is ethereal in nature and not, we repeat, not, the return of the soul to the same disintegrated human body it left previously.

St. Paul has spoken lengthily in exactly these terms about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He believed in the resurrection of not only Jesus (peace be on him), but the resurrection in general of all those who die and are deemed fit by God to be given a new existence and a new form of life. The personality of the soul remains the same, but its abode changes. According to St. Paul this is a general phenomenon which has to be accepted, otherwise there would be no significance to either religion or Christianity.

We invite readers to examine accounts of Jesus' (peace be on him) survival from death on the cross, from a biblical perspective, brought to light by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him), in his book Jesus in India.

Endnotes

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(Review of Religions, 15 April 2011)

Jihad with Sword

Attiya Tulbari Ghani, Georgia

"Beware; there will be no prophet or messenger between Jesus, the son of Mary, and me. Remember, he shall be my Caliph after me to my people. Remember, he will vanquish Anti-Christ, break the Cross (with argument), abolish taking of Jizya (tax collected from defeated people), as there would no longer be any war. Remember, whoever meets him should convey my greetings to him." (Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, Translated from Tabarani al-Ausat was-Sagheer 6. (Al-Baqarah: 190)

This is the prophecy of our beloved Prophet Mohammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about the second coming of Jesus. It states that the Messiah will come into the world and spread the faith through reasoning and arguments. He will establish unity of God and, will interpret Aḥadīth in their real sense, and hence the inherent qualities of Islamic teachings will be explored with proofs, signs and support from Allah, the Exalted.

Some people (Maulawi) think that the Hadith means that Messiah will descend from heaven and will not accept tax and will shed blood on the earth and will convert other people to Islam forcibly. According to them he will be a bloody reformer who will impose Islam on them against their will. Their claim is not only false but also full of every type of fundamental error, and is completely opposite to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. Because Allah, the Exalted clearly states, "There is no compulsion in religion…" (2:257). So how will the Messiah, the Imam of Latter Days, disobey the teachings of the Holy Qur'an? This false belief that Mahdi will impose war on non-Muslims not only brings disgrace to Islam but also leads many innocent minds to the wrong path. The Holy Qur'an states, "Allah forbids you not, respecting those who have not fought against you on account of your religion, and who have not driven you forth from your homes, that you be kind to them and act equitably towards them; surely Allah loves those who are equitable" (60:9). The interpretation of this verse given by evil-minded Maulawīs will convert people to barbaric beasts. They will go out and kill innocent people in the name of the religion, which is completely prohibited in Islam. How is such an action, which is completely wrong and cruel and devoid of all moral values, the key to heaven? How would they justify shooting a stranger who has done no harm to Islam or Muslims? How would they claim themselves to be true followers of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who was sent as a "Blessing for Entire Mankind." No hadith and no verse from the Holy Qur'an permit such an outrage. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) said, "I know for certain that the burden of the sins of those people who commit murders through ignorance on account of such preaching's, and who are unaware of the reason why Islam had to fight battles in its early stages, lies on the necks of these Maulawīs who go on propagating secretly these dangerous doctrines which result in such grievous loss of life." (British Government and Jihad, p. 12)

It should also be remembered that Islam is a legitimate religion, which does not need sword for its propagation. Even in the beginning Muslims were not commanded to take up the sword right away. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had to face great hardships. His followers were killed and tortured in a shameless way, and disbelievers did not even spare Muslim women and children. Muslims faced all these atrocities just because they believed that "Our

Lord is Allah, and Mohammad is His messenger." There was also a time when these cruel people chased the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to put his life to an end and he had to migrate. When disbelievers crossed all the limits then victims (Muslims) were given permission to fight back, and it was done after facing long time aggression. The Holy Qur'an states, "Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged - and Allah indeed has power to help them" (22:40). This was the time when Muslims fought for the sake of their Lord and not for any worldly motive. This permission was indeed required, as Allah Ta'ala has always helped the righteous people who have sacrificed everything for their faith. So, with the help of Allah, the Almighty, those who were weak and oppressed and were attacked first, became known as champions.

It has become clear with the advent of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) that jihad of the sword has been ended and jihad of self-purification must be continued. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) states, "Now that the Promised Messiah has come, it is the duty of every Muslim that he should refrain from having recourse to fighting for the propagation of the faith. Had I not come there might have been some excuse for this misunderstanding? But now that I have arrived and you have witnessed the day of promise, those who take up the sword on behalf of the faith have no excuse left which they can put forth before God Almighty. He who possesses eyes and can read the Holy Qur'ān and the Aḥadīth can realize that this kind of jihad, which the ignorant ones insist upon in this age, is not authorized by Islam. It is an error which has spread among the Muslims in consequence of the upsurge of unlawful passions or the vain hope of winning paradise through such misguided action." (British Government and Jihad, p. 5)

As Ahmadi Muslims, it is our foremost duty to follow the Imam of the age. We should purify our hearts and foster mercy and should have sympathy for other creations of Allah. We should promote peace on the earth, for this would cause our faith to spread. Allah the Almighty assured the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) that, "They should not wonder how this would come about. As God Almighty has utilized the elements and all earthly means for the purpose of bringing about new inventions to serve human needs like mechanical locomotion, etc., in the same way He will put His angels to work for the fulfillment of spiritual needs through heavenly signs, without the intervention of human agencies and there will appear many flashes of light whereby the eyes of multitudes will be opened (British Government and Jihad, pp. 14-15).

May Allah enable us to purify ourselves? Ameen.

Incorporating Salat in our daily schedule

Shehla Ahmad, South Virginia

In today's world one thing that is most scarce and valuable is time. We all appear to be conscious of the ways we spend our time and at times quote "lack of time" as an excuse when we are not able to fulfill some commitments. But the question arises in the grand scheme of life as planned by Allah Ta'ala, is there a solution to overcome this challenge ? Referring to the Holy Quran, prayer or Salat is that key to make our lives regular. Allah, the Almighty states:

"Verily Prayer is enjoined on the believers to be performed at fixed hours" (4[An-Nisa']:104).

Five daily prayers have a prescribed range of time which at the outset may appear to be challenging. However, if we look closely, the prayer itself helps in making our daily schedule. Fajr Salat is performed before the sunrise. It sets us to start our day early and avail the health and spiritual benefits. There is a Salat around lunch time to provide us with spiritual food and take a break from work. Asr Salat is at the end of normal work/school hours. We offer Maghreb Salat to mark the end of daylight and return home. With Isha, it's a message to unwind, review the day and get ready to sleep. Following this we can adopt the habit of going to bed and waking up early, which is a tested formula of success in life. In other words, if we start scheduling our day around Salat, our day will be spent in the most productive and efficient way beneficial to both worlds.

As a Muslim, we believe in the afterlife. This life is temporary, and nothing compared to what is to follow. Just like we study so that we may perform well in the exams. Similarly, it makes perfect sense to prioritize something on our daily calendar which will be a must and first question on the exam in the afterlife. Hazrat Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said: The first item in respect of which a person would be called to account on the Day of Judgment will be Prayer. If that is found in order, he would be successful and prosper, but if that is not in order he would be ruined and lost. In case of a shortcoming in his obligations the Lord of honor and glory will say: Look, if among the voluntary actions of My servant there is anything that would make up the shortcomings in respect of his obligations. All his obligations would be checked up in that manner. (Tirmidhi) [Garden of the Righteous (Riyad as-Salihin of Imam Nawawi, translated by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan,

p. 196, Hadith 1085]

Giving precedence to prayer or Salat is a guarantee of worldly success as well. Allah states in the Holy Quran, "Surely, success does come to the believers, Who are humble in their Prayers" (23[Al-Mu'minun]:2-3).

No matter how much we are convinced of the benefits of something, we may still struggle if we don't develop a liking or taste for that. Same is applicable to Salat. We will find it very easy to put Salat first if we develop its true taste and won't be able to skip it and move on without performing it.

Promised Messiah (may peace be on him) said: "What is Salat? It is a supplication addressed to the Lord of Honor without which a person cannot be truly alive, nor can he procure any means of security and happiness. When God Almighty bestows this grace upon a person it is only then that he obtains true comfort. From that moment he will begin to feel pleasure and delight in Salat. As he derives pleasure from delicious food, he will begin to derive pleasure from his weeping and crying in Salat. Before he experiences that condition in his Salat it is necessary that he should persist in Salat as he swallows bitter medicine so that he may be restored to health. In the same way it is necessary for him to persist in Salat and in making his supplications while he derives no pleasure from them. In such condition he should seek pleasure and delight in Salat with the supplication: Allah! Thou knowest how blind and sightless I am, and at the moment I am like the dead. I know that in a little while I shall be called and shall present myself before Thee and no one will be able to stop me. But my heart is blind and unenlightened. Do Thou cause to descend upon it such a flame of light that thereby it may be inspired with Thy love and devotion to Thee. Do Thou bestow upon me such grace that I shall not be raised up sightless nor join the blind. When he supplicates in this manner and persists in the supplication, he will see that a time will arrive when something will descend upon him while he is engaged in such type of prayer which will melt his heart. [Malfūzāt, Vol. IV, pp. 321-322 quoted in Essence of Islam Vol. II translated by Chaudhri Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, p. 297-298, Islam International Publications Ltd.]

True realization of the blessing of Salat and experiencing it on every day basis is the key which enables us to revolve our daily life around it.

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USA Jamāʻat Calendar 2023

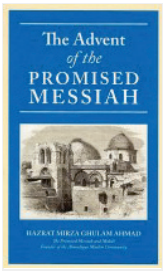
Date/Day/Time	Event	Local/Region/National	Venue
1 Jan, Sun	New Year's Day	.	Federal Holiday
7-8 Jan-Sat-Sun	Local/Auxiliary Activities, Reviews 2022 & Plans 2023	Local/ Auxiliary/Jamāʻat	
8 Jan, Sun [3 PM EST]	An Overview of Jamāʻat Financial System	National Finance Dept.	Webinar
8 Jan, Sun [8 PM EST]	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyat Dept.	Webinar
10-20 Jan-Tue-Fri	Ashara Waṣiyyat	National Wasaya Dept	Jamāʻat
13-15 Jan-Fri-Sun	Ansar Leadership Conference Aux National Majlis Ansarullah		Baitul Ikram Dallas
14 Jan-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jamaʻat	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
16 Jan, Mon	Martin Luther King Jr Day—Long Weekend	.	Federal Holiday
21 Jan-Sat	9th Annual USA Qurʻān & Science Symposium AAMS		Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
22 Jan Sun	Seerat-un-Nabi Day	Regional	Jama'at
28 Jan-Sat	Waqf-e-Nau Career Expo-National	National Waqf-e-Nau Dept.	In-Person / Virtual
29 Jan, Sun,	Public Affairs Seminar National Umur Khārijiyya Dept		Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
1-10 Feb-Wed-Fri	Salat Ashara	National Tarbiyat Dept	Jamāʻat
4-5 Feb, Sat-Sun	Local Jamāʻat /Auxiliary Activities	Local/Auxiliary	Jamāʻat
11 Feb-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
12 Feb Sun	President's Refresher Course	National Jamāʻat	GS Office Zoom
12 Feb-Sun 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	. Tarbiyat Department	Webinar
17-19 Feb-Fri-Sun	Masroor International Sports Tournament	Sports Dept	New York
18 Feb Sat	Jami'a Inspiration and Orientation Camp	Waqf-e-Nau Dept	Virtual
20 Feb, Mon	President's Day - Long Weekend		Federal Holiday
25 Feb, Sun	Lajna National Tabligh/Media/Public Affair Training	Aux National Lajna Ima'illah	Virtual
26 Feb, Sat	Muslih Mauʻūd Day	Local	Jamāʻat
4-5 Mar, Sat-Sun	Local Jamāʻat /Auxiliary Activities	Local/Auxiliary	Jamāʻat
4-5 Mar, Sat-Sun	MKA Khuddam / Atfāl Ijtima	Auxiliary MKA	Local
10-12 Mar Fri-Sun	2nd Refresher Course, Dar-ul-Qada USA	Dar-ul-Qada Dept	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
10-20 Mar-Fri-Mon	Ashara Waṣiyyat	National Wasaya Dept	Jamāʻat
11 Mar-Sat	Rishta Nata Webinar-Garments for Each Other	National Rishta Nata Dept	Webinar
11 Mar-Sat	Rishta Nata-Meet and Greet Program	National Rishta Nata Dept	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
12 Mar, Sun, 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyyat Dept.	Webinar
17-19-Mar, Fri-Sun	Lajna National Mentoring Conference	Aux National Lajna Ima'illah	Bait-ul-Ikram, Dallas
18 Mar-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
18 Mar-Sat	Local Qurʻān Conference	TaQWA Dept	Jamāʻat
19 Mar-Sun	Know Your History Webinar	Isha'at Dept	Webinar
23 Mar to 20 Apr	Ramadan Starts	Local	Jamāʻat
26 Mar, Sun	Masih Mauʻūd Day	Local	Jamāʻat
1-10 Apr-Sat-Mon	Salat Ashara	National Tarbiyat Dept	Jamāʻat
1-2 Apr, Sat-Sun	Local Jamāʻat /Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamāʻat
9 Apr, Sun, 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyyat Dept.	Webinar
21 Apr, Fri	Eid-ul-Fitr	Local	Jamāʻat
28-30 Apr, Fri-Sun	Majlis Shura-USA Jamāʻat	General Secretary Office	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
6-7 May, Sat-Sun	Local Jamāʻat /Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamāʻat
6 May, Sat	Waqf-e-Nau Regional Ijtima	Waqf-e-Nau Dept.	In-Person / East Coast Regions
13 May, Sat	Waqf-e-Nau Regional Ijtima	Waqf-e-Nau Dept.	In-Person / West & Central Regions
13-14 May, Sat-Sun	Ansar Regional Ijtimas	Aux Majlis Ansarullah	Local / Regional
14 May, Sun, 8 PM Tarbiyat Webinar		National Tarbiyat Dept.	Webinar
18-21 May Thu to Sun	Jamiʻa Canada Visit (Parents & Atfāl/Khuddam)	National Waqf-e-Nau Dept.	In Person Canada
19-21 May Fri- Sun	Regional Ijtimas Khuddam / Atfāl	Aux MKA	Local / Regional
20 May-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
20-21 May-Sat-Sun	Majlis Ansarullah Family Day	Aux Majlis Ansarullah	Local
28 May, Sun	Khilafat Day	Local	Jamāʻat
29 May, Mon	Memorial Day Long Weekend		Federal Holiday
1-10 Jun-Thu-Sat	Salat Ashara	National Tarbiyat Dept	Jamāʻat
3-4 Jun, Sat-Sun	Local Jamāʻat/Auxiliary Activities	Local/Auxiliary	Jamāʻat
10 Jun-Sat	Rishta Nata Webinar-Garments for Each Other	National Rishta Nata Dept	Webinar
11 Jun, Sun, 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyat Dept.	Webinar

17-18 Jun, Sat-Sun	Spiritual Fitness Camp	National Tarbiyyat Dept	Local Jama'at
18 Jun-Sun	Know Your History Webinar	Ishaat Dept	Webinar
19-22 Jun Mon-Thu	Waqf-e-Nau National Summer Camp	Waqf-e-Nau Dept	South Virginia Mosque, VA
23-25 Jun, Fri-Sun	MKA National Ijtima	Aux National MKA.	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
24 Jun Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person/Zoom Meeting
28 June, Wed	Eid-ul-Aḍḥā	Local	Jamā'at
30 Jun to 9 Jul Fri-Sun	Ashara Waṣiyyat	National Wasaya Dept	Jamā'at
1-2 Jul Sat-Sun	Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamā'at
4 Jul, Tue	Independence Day	.	Federal Holiday
8-14 Jul, Sat-Fri	National Youth Camp	Talim Dept	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
8-9 Jul, Sat-Sun	Ansar Regional Ijtimas	Aux Majlis Ansarullah	Local / Regional
9 Jul Sun	Academy Graduation	Tarbiyat Dept	Local Mosque
9 Jul Sun	Tarbiyat Webinar – 8 PM EDT	Tarbiyat Dept	Webinar
9 Jul, Sat-Sun	Tahir Academy Graduation	Tarbiyat Dept	Local Mosques
14-16 Jul Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana USA	National	PA Farm Show Harrisburg PA
28-30 Jul, Fri to Sun	Jalsa Salana UK	UK	UK
29 Jul Sat	Lajna National Virtual Mentoring Conference	Aux National Lajna Ima'illah	Virtual
1-10 Aug-Sat-Mon	Salat Ashara	National Tarbiyat Dept	Jamā'at
5-6 Aug, Sat-Sun	Local Jamā'at /Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamā'at
12-13 Aug, Sat-Sun	Spiritual Fitness Camp	Tarbiyat Dept	Local Jamā'at
13 Aug Sun, 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyyat Dept.	Webinar
17-22 Aug Thu-Tue	National Tarbiyat Camp (15-18 Years old)	Aux MKA.	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
19 Aug-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
25-27 Aug-Fri-Sun	Lajna National Ijtima Aux National Lajna Ima'illah		Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
26 Aug-Fri-Sat	Annual Tahir Academy Conference	Tarbiyat Dept	Baltimore Masjid, MD
2-3 Sep, Sat & Sun	Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamā'at
2-4 Sep, Sat-Mon	Labor Day - Long Weekend	.	Federal Holiday
9-10 Sep-Sat-Sun	Majlis Ansarullah Family Day	Aux Majlis Ansarullah	Local
10 Sep, Sun, 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyyat Dept.	Webinar
16 Sep-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
16 Sep-Sat	Rishta Nata Webinar-Garments for Each Other	National Rishta Nata Dept	Webinar
17 Sept, Sun	Know Your History [7:30 to 8:30 PM EST]	National Isha'at Dept	Webinar
22-24 Sept, Fri-Sun	MKA Majlis-e-Shura	Aux National MKA	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
30 Sept-1 Oct, Sat-Sun	Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamā'at
1-10 Oct-Sun-Tue	Salat Ashara	National Tarbiyat Dept	Jamā'at
6-8 Oct Fri-Sun	Ansarullah National Shura/National Ijtima	Auxiliary/Ansarullah	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
7-8 Oct Sat-Sun	Atfāl Rallies	Aux MKA Regional	Local MKA
8 Oct, Sun, 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyyat Dept.	Webinar
9 Oct, Mon	Columbus Day - Long Weekend	.	Federal Holiday
14 Oct-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
14 Oct-Sat	Annual Tarbiyat Conference	Tarbiyat Dept	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
21-22 Oct Sat Sun	National Qur'an Conference	TaQWA Dept	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
27-29 Oct, Fri to Sun	Majlis-e-Shura Lajna Ima'illah USA	Aux National Lajna Ima'illah	Atlanta Mosque, GA
3-13 Nov-Fri-Mon	Ashara Waṣiyyat	National Wasaya Dept	Jamā'at
4-5 Nov, Sat-Sun	Local Jamā'at /Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamā'at
11 Nov-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
11 Nov-Sat	Waqf-e-Nau Regional Ijtima	Waqf-e-Nau Dept.	In-Person / East Coast Regions
12 Nov, Sun, 8 PM EST	National Tarbiyat Webinar	National Tarbiyyat Dept.	Webinar
18 Nov Sat	National Annual Tarbiyat Conference	Tarbiyat Dept	Bait ur Rahman Mosque, MD
18 Nov Sat	Waqf-e-Nau Regional Ijtima	Waqf-e-Nau Dept	In Person / West & Central Regions
23-26 Nov, Thu-Sun	Thanksgiving – Long Weekend	.	Federal Holiday
1-10 Dec-Fri-Sun	Salat Ashara	National Tarbiyat Dept	Jamā'at
2-3 Dec, Sat-Sun	Local Jamā'at /Auxiliary Activities	Local/ Auxiliary	Jamā'at
8-10 Dec Fri-Sun	Fazl-e-'Umar Qa'ideen Conf/Atfāl Refresher Course	Aux National MKA	Bait-ur-Rahman, MD
9 Dec-Sat	National Amila Meeting	National Jama'at	In-Person / Zoom Meeting
9 Dec-Sat	Rishta Nata Webinar-Garments for Each Other	National Rishta Nata Dept	Webinar
10 Dec Sun	Tarbiyat Webinar – 8 PM EDT	Tarbiyat Dept	Webinar
17 Dec-Sun	Know Your History	Isha'at Dept	Webinar
22-24 Dec, Fri-Sun	West Coast Jalsa Salana (Tentative)	National/Jamā'at	Chino Mosque, CA
25 Dec, Mon	Christmas Day	.	Federal Holiday

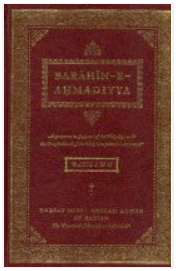
Have you read all the books of the Promised Messiah?

May peace be upon him

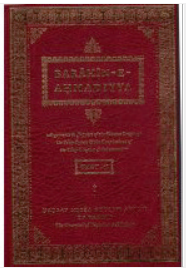
Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, may peace be upon him, says, “Our books are compiled after due research and after a full analysis of facts. They are designed to draw seekers after truth to the path of truth. They must reach people who happen to have been infected by hostile writings, some of them on the brink of spiritual ruin. Especially must those countries receive our books and receive them soon which happen to have been infected most dangerously by the poison of misguidance, so that all those interested in a search of truth have the books soon enough in their hands. This purpose cannot be served if we decide to push the publication and circulation of books only through sales. A business outlook in such a matter in any case seems unworthy and objectionable.” (Victory of Islam, Page 45, Published in 1891)



The Advent of the Promised Messiah



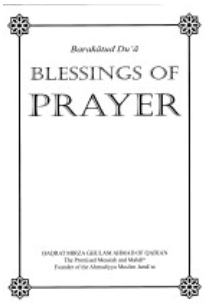
Barahīn-e-Ahmadiyya 1-2



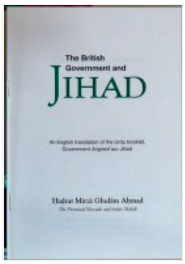
Barahīn-e-Ahmadiyya 3

Barahīn-e-Ahmadiyya 4

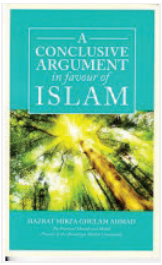
Barahīn-e-Ahmadiyya 5



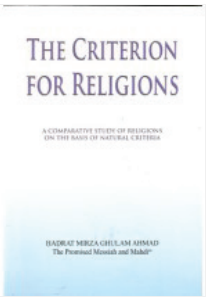
Blessings of Prayer



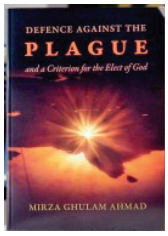
The British Government and Jihad



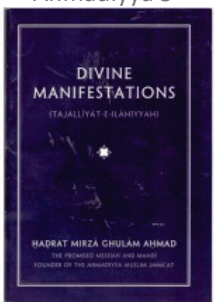
The Conclusive Argument in Favour of Islam



The Criterion for Religions

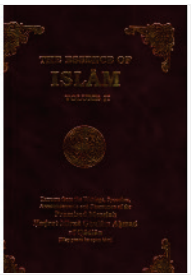


Defense against the Plague and a Criterion for the Elect of God

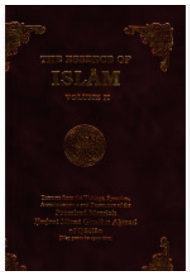


Divine Manifestations

Elucidation of Objectives



The Essence of Islam Volume 1

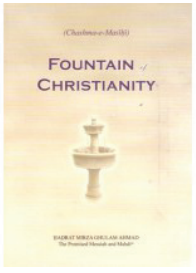


The Essence of Islam 2

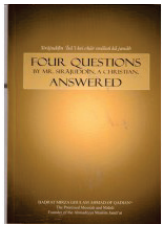
The Essence of Islam 3

The Essence of Islam 4

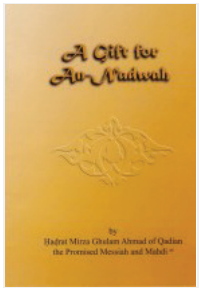
The Essence of Islam 5



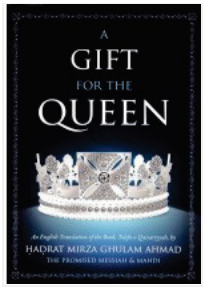
Fountain of Christianity



Four Questions by Mr. Sirajuddin, A Christian, And Their Answers

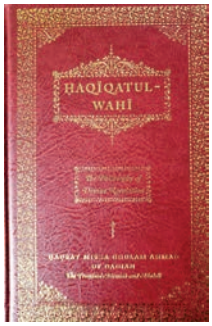


A Gift for Al-Nadwah

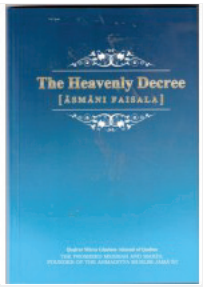


A Gift for the Queen

The Green Announcement

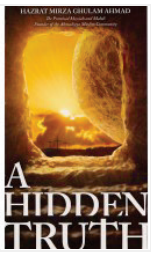


Haqiqat-ul-Wahi

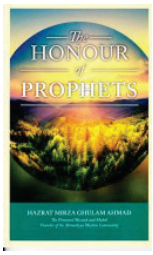


The Heavenly Decree

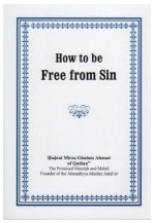
The Heavenly Sign



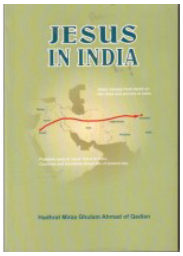
A Hidden Truth



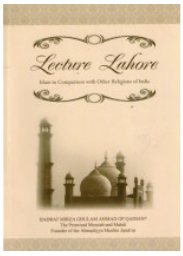
Honor of Prophets



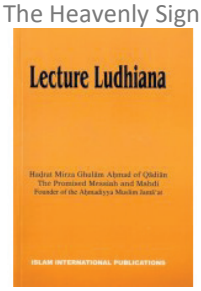
How to be Free from Sin



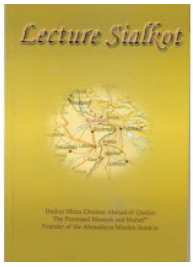
Jesus In India



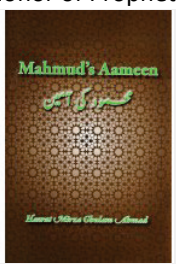
Lecture Lahore



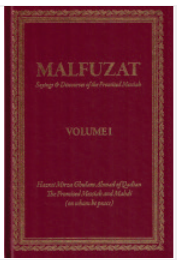
Lecture Ludhiana



Lecture Sialkot

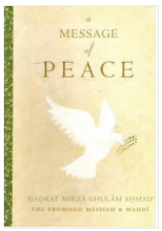


Mahmud's Ameen

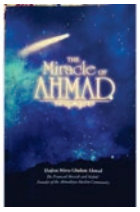


Malfūzāt Volume 1

Malfūzāt Volume 2

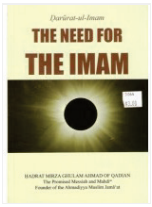


A Message of Peace

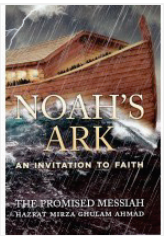


The Miracle of Ahmad

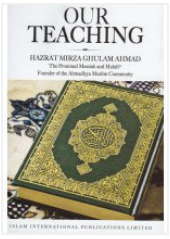
A Misconception Removed



The Need for the Imam

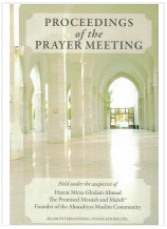


Noah's Ark



Our Teaching

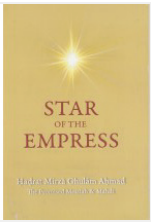
The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam



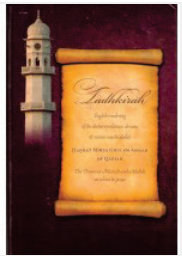
Proceedings of the Prayer Meetings

Al-Qaseeda Audio

A Review of the Debate Between Batalavi and Chakrhalavi



Star of the Empress



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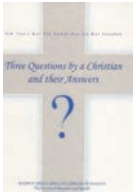
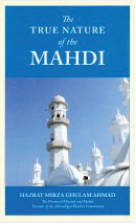
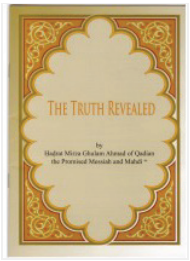


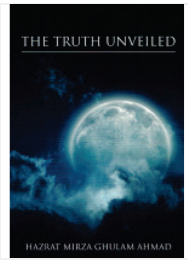
Three Questions by a Christian and Their Answers



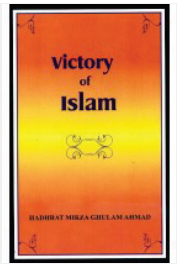
The True Nature of the Mahdi



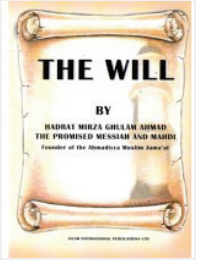
The Truth Revealed



The Truth Unveiled



Victory of Islam



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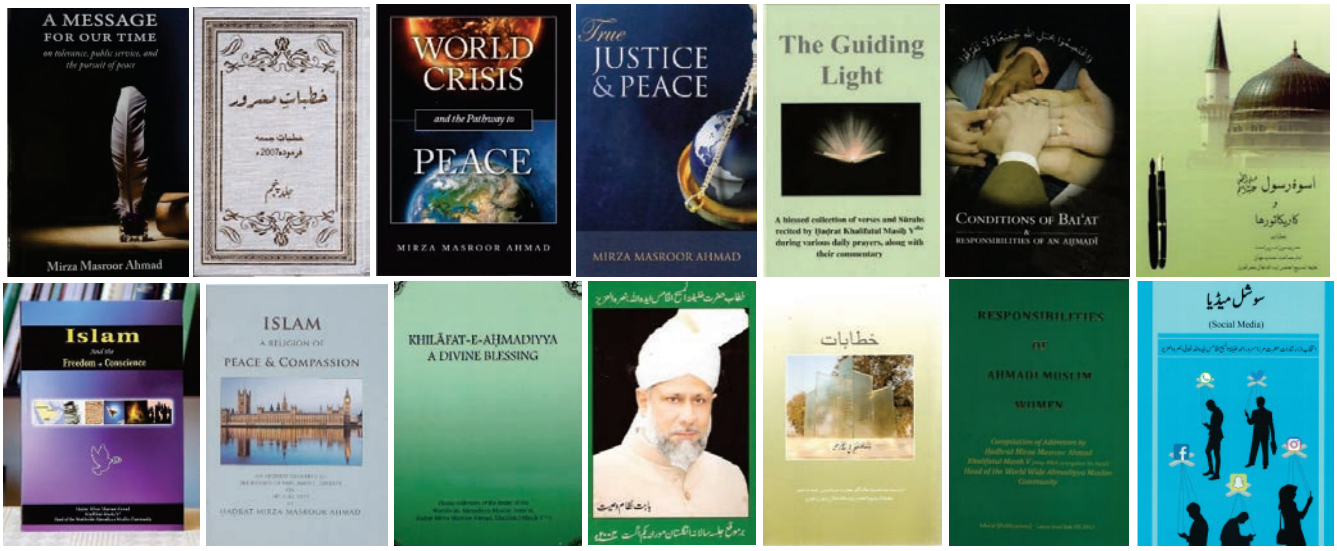

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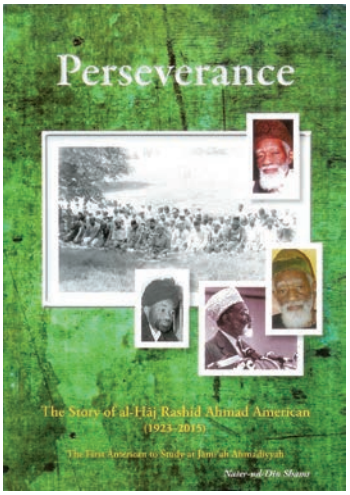

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